

Creating Supported Employment Partnerships for People with Psychiatric Disabilities

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I, Zerina Hajwani, hereby declare that the work on which this thesis is based, on my original work (except acknowledgements indicate otherwise), and that neither the whole work, nor part has been, or is to be submitted for another degree at this or any other university.

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Date: 23/08/2008

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TERMINOLOGY

People with Disabilities

The South African Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998 defines people with disabilities as:

People who have a long term recurring physical or mental impairment that substantially limits their prospects of entry into, or advancement in employment (Silver and Koopman 2000).

Mental Impairment

The Code of Good Practice on key aspects of disability in the workplace interprets the term mental impairment used in the definition that defines people with disabilities in the South African Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998 as:

A mental impairment is a clinically recognised condition or illness that affects a person's thought processes, judgement or emotions. This includes conditions such as intellectual, emotional and learning disabilities. The impairment can be long term or recurring. **Long term** means the impairment has lasted or is likely to persist at least 12 months. **Recurring means** that the impairment is one that is likely to happen again or and to be substantially limiting. The condition can go away for a period of time and return again but it is never cured (Department of labour 2001).

People with Psychiatric Disability

People living with psychiatric or mental illness often experience difficulty in perceiving or interpreting reality, coping with some aspects of daily life, forming and maintaining relationships, coping with difficult feelings, fears and anxieties, or often see and hear things that do not exist (Disabled People South Africa 2001).

Supported Employment

Supported employment is defined as providing integrated jobs in community settings, where persons with disabilities work alongside those without disabilities, and they are provided with individual support to facilitate long-term success (Jenaro, Mank, Bottomley, Doose, & Tuckerman 2002).

Work seekers

In supported employment programmes, a *work seeker* is the term ascribed to people with disability who want to participate in employment.

Work support

A benefit of the supported employment model is the understanding and acceptance that some individuals will need extended support to maintain employment (Goodall & Ghiloni 2001). The extended support is provided by the job coach prior to and during employment at the work site. When this support is carried out by co-workers on the job site then it is termed natural support.

Job Coach

A Job coach is the service provider of a supported employment programme and job coaching may be a full time activity for some professionals while for others it is only a small part of their work tasks (Blitz & Mechanic 2005). A job coach may also be a qualified occupational therapist.

Natural Support

Natural supports are existing workplace structures and systems that could be used to support the supported employment employee (Rogan, Banks, & Herbein 2003).

Employers

The term *employer* will be used here to refer to owners and managers of a business.

Partnership

In the context of this study, the term partnership will be used to refer to an informal partnership between a supported employment programme and a business to meet an agreed objective to create employment opportunities for people with psychiatric disabilities in their businesses.

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on the process of forming partnerships between a supported employment programme and three businesses. A qualitative approach namely collective case study was used. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with five participant employers of three businesses.

Five themes emerged in the first stage of analysis which reflected participants' perceptions of factors that could impact on the formation of supported employment partnerships. In the second stage of analysis, the process of influencing employers' receptivity to establish partnerships emerged. The process comprises five stages that a job coach and an employer may go through to develop a partnership. The stages are 1) Establishing relationships with employers; 2) Identifying a business's needs for a partnership to develop; 3) Tailoring partnerships to meet the needs of a business; 4) Implementation of trial partnerships and placements and 5) Negotiation to extend partnerships to become sustainable. The role of the job coach was found to be integral during initiation of partnerships through approaches such as marketing and networking. The study confirmed that employers require assistance from the job coach to offer support, education and training in a partnership in order to meet the objectives of recruitment, selection, support and training the new supported employee in their business.

Limitations of the study methodology are highlighted in terms of the small sample size and resulting restriction for transferability to the general business community.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Despite evidence to show that supported employment can successfully create jobs in businesses to assist people with psychiatric disabilities to become employed (Crowther, Marshall, Bond, & Huxley 2001; Burns, Catty, Becker, Drake, Fioritti, Knapp, Lauber, Rossler, Tomov, Busschbach, White & Wiersma 2007), supported employment partnerships with businesses remain consistently underdeveloped in South Africa. The process through which partnerships can be developed will be the focus of this research. A South African government based supported employment programme, which was initiated by the researcher, sought new business partners. The process through which new partnerships were established was explored in depth and will be presented here.

In this chapter, the context of employment will be discussed by describing the value of employment and barriers that hinder people with psychiatric disabilities to participate in employment. An introduction to the social-political environment that influences the creation of employment opportunities for people with psychiatric disabilities will be given. Supported employment will be introduced, followed by an exploration of the supported employment relationship with employers to establish partnerships with businesses.

1.1 THE VALUE OF EMPLOYMENT TO PEOPLE WITH PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES

Work is a major determinant of mental health and is a socially integrating force that is highly valued in society (Stuart 2006). Work has been found to have non vocational benefits for people with psychiatric disabilities, such as increasing their self esteem, controlling psychiatric symptoms and improving quality of life (Bond, Resnick, Drake, Xie, McHugo, & Bebout 2001). Obtaining work is considered an essential component assisting people with

psychiatric disabilities to recover and achieve a better quality of life; it is now recognised that work is important in maintaining mental health and promoting the recovery of those who experience psychiatric illness (Boardman, Grove, Perkins & Shepherd 2003). Employment provides time structure to one's day, a social context outside of the family, a sense of identity and regular activity, which all contribute in promoting mental wellbeing (World Federation of Mental Health 2001). Similarly, it has been found that clients with severe mental illness in competitive employment had experienced non vocational benefits such as improvement in symptoms, satisfaction with vocational services, increased engagement in leisure, financial gain and (improved) self esteem in comparison to clients who participated in combined minimal work or no work (Bond, Resnick, Drake, Xie, McHugo, Bebout 2001). Work can facilitate economic empowerment of people with psychiatric disability, it therefore has an obvious advantage which is to alleviate poverty (Van Niekerk 2004).

1.2 BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT AMONGST PEOPLE WITH PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES

1.2.1 Prevalence of unemployment

Statistics South Africa (2005) recognised that there is a lack of sufficient and accurate data on disability. The unreliability of statistics is due to a number of factors. These include different definitions of disability, different survey methodologies used to collect information, negative traditional attitudes towards people with disabilities, poor service infrastructure for persons with disabilities in underdeveloped areas and violence levels (Statistics SA 2005). Estimating the prevalence of unemployment amongst people with psychiatric disability is therefore complex. However, it has been estimated that in South Africa:

- Approximately 5% of the total South African population (44 819 778) had been classified as 'disabled' (Statistics SA 2005).

- Out of the total disabled population, the prevalence of 'emotional' disability was identified at 16% (Statistics SA 2005).
- 19% of disabled persons were employed compared to 35% of the general population. Included in this statistic are people with psychiatric disabilities (Statistics SA 2005).

It is therefore clear that people with disabilities in South Africa are disadvantaged and severely marginalised as far as access to employment is concerned.

The South African International Disability Strategy (Office of the Deputy President 1997) has commented that discriminatory attitudes and practices by employers and the lack of enabling mechanisms to promote employment opportunities were contributing factors to the high level of unemployment amongst persons with disabilities. Access to employment specifically for people with psychiatric disability is an international problem. For example, unemployment rates for people with severe mental illness are estimated to be as high as 75-85% in the United States and 61-73% in the United Kingdom (Crowther, Marshall, Bond & Huxley 2001).

Barriers do impact on the employment or re-employment status of people with psychiatric disabilities. Historically, the employment of people with disabilities depended on economic growth, the overall rate of employment and times of labour shortage (Boardman et al. 2003)

According to Manning and White (1995) people with mental illness experience problems entering into open labour market employment due to stigma, a reluctance to employ them and a perceived risk of failure. Difficulties that some people with psychiatric disabilities can experience in the world of work have been identified as:

- Difficulty in obtaining work.
- Once employed they could experience difficulties specifically:

- interacting or conversing with others,
- maintaining work stamina and managing symptoms,
- Difficulties in concentrating and working independently (MacDonald-Wilson, Rogers, Massaro, Lyass & Creann 2002).

Stuart (2006) found that people with psychiatric disabilities have been segregated from mainstream employment because of prejudicial attitudes by employers. Randall and Buys (2006) identified barriers to employment for people with Schizophrenia as:

- negative attitudes towards people with schizophrenia resulting in social stigma,
- employer hiring practices which screen out applicants with poor employment histories,
- a reduction in the type of specialised and integrated services necessary to support a person with mental illness into employment.

Boardman et al. (2003) attributed the welfare system as a “benefit trap” that could serve as a barrier to employment because there is a fine balance that exists between supporting people who cannot work and the creation of disincentives to returning to work for those who can.

These barriers demonstrate that a need for more employment opportunities is critically important for people with psychiatric disabilities. Furthermore, it implies that not enough employers and employment services are involved in successful strategies to integrate people with psychiatric disabilities into the open labour market. It can also be assumed that to achieve successful job placements of people with psychiatric disabilities, strategies and approaches of employment services must address these barriers.

1.3 CREATING ACCESS TO OPEN LABOUR MARKET EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES

There are compelling ethical, socio-political, and clinical reasons for helping people with psychiatric disabilities to gain employment.

From an ethical point of view, the human right to work is universally promoted for people with disabilities. For example, the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) has adopted the Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. Its Rule 7 on employment states that people with disabilities should be empowered to exercise their right to gainful employment and that it is the responsibility of states to remove remaining obstacles to employment. It advocates that the aim should always be for people with disabilities to obtain **employment in the open labour market** (United Nations 1994).

From a socio-political viewpoint, high unemployment rates are an index of the social exclusion of people with psychiatric disabilities which governments are committed to reducing. For example, in South Africa, the rights of people with disabilities are now protected under the constitution. The formation of policy and legislation has been redesigned to extend anti-discrimination protection to individuals with disabilities. The South African Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998 directs employers of businesses to implement employment equity which includes employment of people with all disabilities. Employment legislation that adopt a Social Model of Disability perspective thus increasingly converge around three key issues: the need to promote greater employment equity for persons with physical and psychiatric disabilities; the outlawing of occupational discrimination of disabled workers in recruitment, retention and promotion; and the requirement for employers to make reasonable accommodations for disabled employees (Stuart 2006).

From a clinical viewpoint, the known value of vocational and non vocational benefits that employment opportunities can offer people with disabilities (including people with psychiatric disabilities) have been considered and therefore targeted as a priority in rehabilitation programmes. For example, the South African National Vocational Rehabilitation Policy provides a directive for employers and service providers (such as occupational therapists) to come together and jointly facilitate better economic and social inclusion of people with disability into mainstream employment (Office of the Deputy President 1997). Examples of economic empowerment programmes include a range of models such as vocational rehabilitation, temporary employment placement and supported employment.

1.4 SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Supported employment programmes assist adults with severe mental illness to enter jobs that meet their personal preferences, thereby achieving social inclusion, relief from poverty and diminished reliance on government welfare (Burns, Catty, Becker, Drake, Fioritti, Knapp, Lauber, Roesler, Tomov, Busschbach, White & Wiersma 2007). Growing evidence imply that supported employment programmes can facilitate successful long term sustainable employment in real workplaces (Crowther, Marshall, Bond, & Huxley 2001). In a recent systematic review supported employment was found to be the model of choice over other vocational rehabilitation programmes for people with psychiatric disability (Marshall, Crowther, Almaraz-Serrana, Creed, Sledge, Kluiter, Roberts, Hill, Wiersma, Bond, Huxley & Tyre 2001). It can therefore be said that supported employment programmes can assist people with psychiatric disabilities to overcome the social, political and economic barriers to obtain and maintain employment. Furthermore, it can be seen that employers can choose the option of collaborating with supported employment programmes in order to recruit and place people with disabilities into their businesses.

1.4.1 Supported employment outcomes

1.4.1.1 Integrated jobs and Social inclusion

Supported employment is defined as providing integrated jobs in community settings, where persons with disabilities work alongside those without disabilities, and they are provided with individual support to facilitate long-term success (Jenaro, Mank, Bottomley, Doose, & Tuckerman 2002). Integrated work settings should afford the individual with a disability access to a job in a community for work to become a part of that person's community life (Wehman, Armstrong, & Brooke 1997). Integrated settings should also afford the person with a disability the opportunity to work alongside other co-workers who are not disabled in a typical business setting (Wehman et al. 1997). A supported employment job facilitates social inclusion and acceptance by co workers, thereby enhancing opportunities for people with psychiatric disability to develop friendships (Bond et al. 2001).

1.4.1.2 Ongoing support

A benefit of the supported employment model is the understanding and acceptance that some individuals will need extended support to maintain employment (Goodall & Ghiloni 2001). Supported employment commits to ongoing support that can occur at, or away from the job site over the life of employment thereby assisting an individual with a disability to successfully maintain employment over time (Wehman et al. 1997).

1.4.1.3 Work accommodations

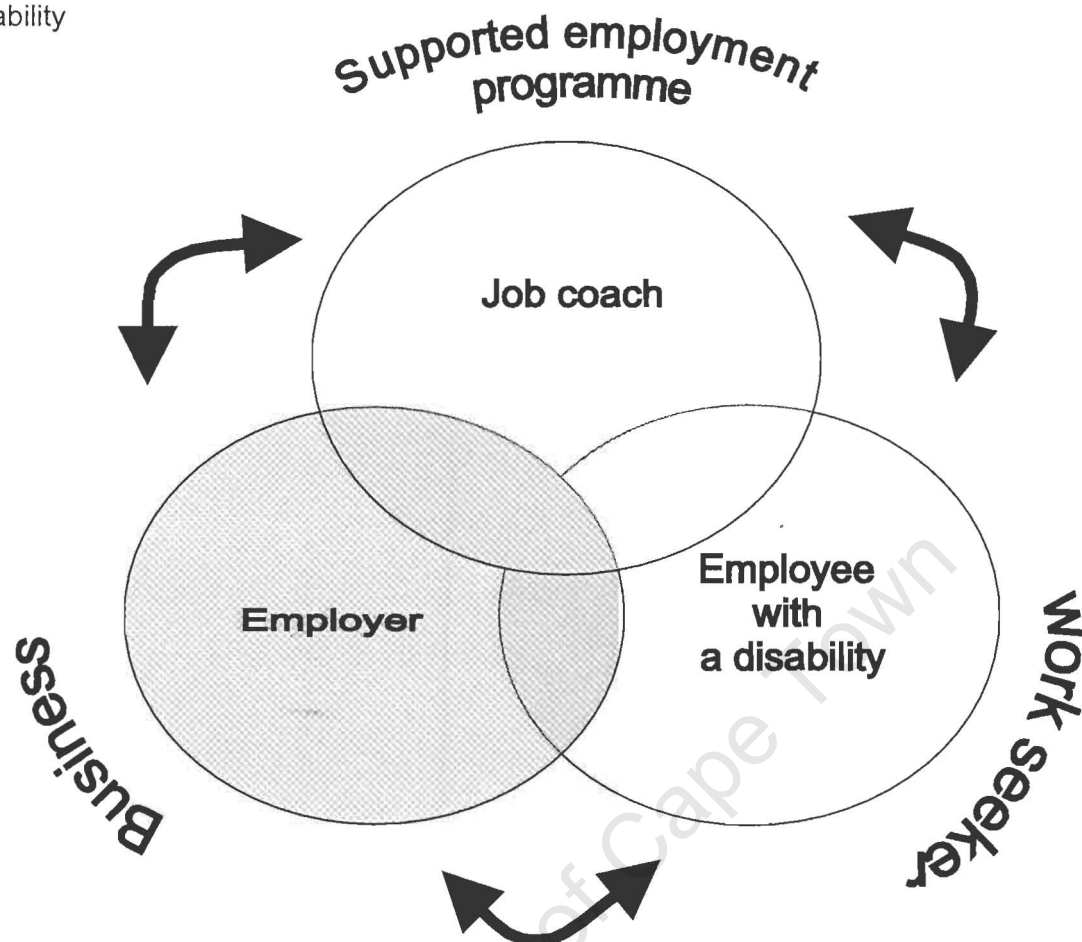
Supported employment programmes facilitate special accommodations made for people with disabilities in the workplace. Key accommodations needed specifically for people with

psychiatric disability involve human assistance of some kind, usually to provide extra supervision and training before and during the obtainment of work, and assisting employers to modify job duties that will best suit the worker with a psychiatric disability (MacDonald-Wilson, Rogers, Massaro, Lyass, & Crean 2002). Other examples are adjustment of work time and leave (including sick leave) and educating co workers about psychiatric disability (Van Niekerk 2004). Such education is used to maximise the opportunity for the person with a psychiatric disability to foster good working relationships with colleagues.

1.4.1.4 Relationships in supported employment

The basic aim of supported employment programmes is to place a person with a disability into a job in the open labour market/community business/real work place. The employment relationship is therefore between the employer and the employee (with a psychiatric disability) and a third party which is the job coach from the supported employment programme. The role of the job coach is to implement strategies aimed at promoting harmonious employee-employer relationships that will result in long term sustainable employment for the employee with a psychiatric disability. This dynamic relationship is represented in figure 1.

Figure 1: The relationship between the job coach, employer and person with psychiatric disability



1.4.1.5 The job coach role

The role of the job coach in a supported employment programme is integral to provide a service to both the employer and the employee with a psychiatric disability. Pertinent steps during the job coaching process with the person with a disability cover aspects such as:

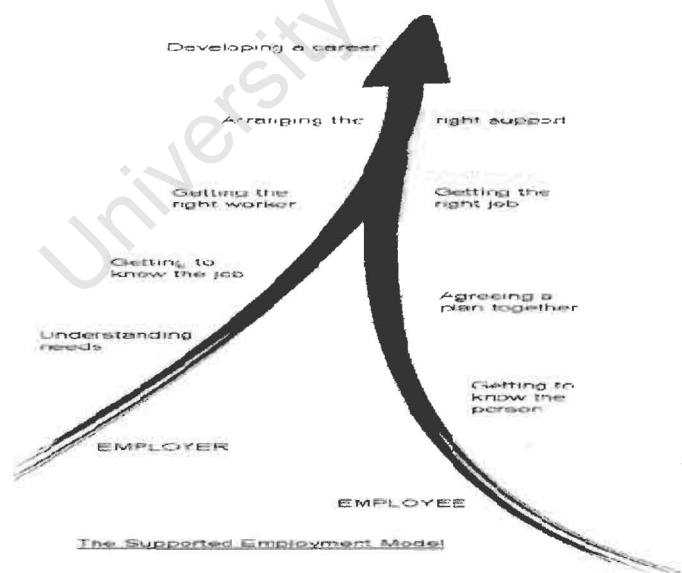
- Getting to know the needs, skills and preferences of the employee.
- Identifying the job that will match the employee with a disability.
- Job placement and ongoing support at and or away from work.

Pertinent steps which cover aspects related to the employer during the job coaching process include:

- To source jobs in businesses.
- Getting to know the needs of the employer, and simultaneously understanding how the job is required for the business
- Implement job placements and train workers with a disability in a job.
- Ensuring that a plan of support by the job coach is in place and assist employers to implement workplace accommodations
- Lastly, there should be a plan for advancing a career for the employee with a disability in the workplace with the support of the employer.

The British Association of Supported Employment formulated a diagrammatical presentation (figure 2) that illustrates the dual role of a job coach working alongside and together with employer and the employee with a disability.

Figure 2: A model of supported employment that illustrates the dual role of a job coach working with the employer and employee.



(British Association of Supported Employment 2007)

1.4.1.6 Establishing supported employment partnerships with employers

Establishing relationships with employers is vital for the success of supported employment programmes (Wehman, Revell, & Brooke 2003). Occupational therapists that provide supported employment services have to network with prospective employers to create or find job matches and market clients to potential employers (Moll, Huff & Detwiller 2003). In supported employment, the initial employer job coach relationship is concerned with the willingness of employers to engage in future relationships with employees with a disability and disability employment services (Smith, Webber, Graffam, Wilson 2004). The employer job coach relationship therefore facilitates collaboration between businesses and the supported employment programme. A deduction can be made that all supported employment programmes have to work alongside employers so that an agreement will be reached to offer the person with a disability a job. In essence, the creation of a sustainable partnership is the most important step for supported employment to become a reality.

Partnership models that derived from contemporary business practices tend to focus on developing long term relationships with employers built on competency, trust, customer satisfaction and mutual benefits (Randall & Buys 2006). The premise of contemporary business practice models is that supported employment agencies establish partnerships when employers have a demand for workers to do specific jobs and who meet the required labour needs. An alternative approach to securing employment with employers is entrepreneurial job development. This approach focuses on meeting the needs of an employer by creating a new position that will be an advantage to the employer's business and matching this position to the skill of a disadvantaged work seeker (Randall & Buys 2006).

The terms of agreement between businesses and a supported employment programme to employ a person with a disability leaves scope for a formalised business partnership to be formed. This research study will however look at partnerships based on informal agreements between businesses and supported employment programmes. The goal of obtaining equal employee status for the person with a disability in a business is crucial in both formal and informal partnerships. If then, employees in a business have a formal employment contract then the goal in a partnership agreement would be to obtain a formal contract agreement between the employee with a disability and the employer.

1.5 CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH STUDY: THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME BASED AT VALKENBERG PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL

The study was done at a supported employment programme currently operating at Valkenberg Psychiatric Hospital, Cape Town, South Africa. The supported employment programme forms part of the occupational therapy service offered at Valkenberg Hospital. The programme is managed by one occupational therapist (also the researcher) and an occupational therapy assistant that both act as job coaches. A key objective of this programme is to develop employer partnerships in order to create sustainable work opportunities for people with psychiatric disabilities in real workplaces.

Informal partnerships have been formed between seven businesses and the supported employment programme based at Valkenberg psychiatric hospital. To date there are 25 workers who have obtained and maintained their employment status via the supported employment programme. In some businesses work positions have been created for up to six people with psychiatric disability. Of the 25 workers, four workers have been employed for eight years, six workers have been employed for six years, and the rest vary from two years to three months.

The supported employment programme offers its services to people with psychiatric disabilities in forensic wards, general psychiatric wards and outpatients. Some of the supported employment work seekers choose to attend the daily industrial therapy work training programme whilst waiting for a supported employment placement in a business. These clients experience unemployment combined with social segregation which has had devastating effects on their roles and responsibilities. Whilst unemployed, these clients remain vulnerable and are trapped by poverty and social exclusion without the chance to fulfil traditional family responsibilities.

The general problems experienced by this group of people include substance abuse, interpersonal communication difficulties, difficulties with problem solving, a history of aggression and in some instances a criminal history. Most of the work seekers had lost confidence in their ability to take on a worker role. Most of them are semi skilled and have had limited previous work experience or a history of unemployment (for a period of ten years in some cases). Most work seekers have low educational qualifications because they left school at an early age, usually at no higher than a primary school level.

A general tendency in the programme has been that work seekers are willing to do any type of work. They tend to favour work as gardeners, handymen, cleaners and car washers. Their average wage expectancy has been observed to be a surprisingly low, R100 to R300 per week. Workers generally earn R250 to R450 per week.

All of the work placements made by this supported employment programme have a support plan offered to the workers and the employers. The nature of support varies and some employers are more capable than others to provide support to the worker, whilst some employers need more assistance than others to implement work accommodations. All the

workers that have been placed into employment via this supported employment programme receive special accommodations such as an agreed time to attend their medical appointments, collect their disability grants, or any other adjustments in work hours to suit their special needs.

Efforts to establish partnerships with more employers remain an ongoing objective of this supported employment programme so that more workers with psychiatric disabilities can enjoy the experience of meaningful work.

1.6 A RATIONALE FOR THIS RESEARCH STUDY

Personal experience has shown that the establishment of partnerships with employers is not an easy or a quick process. In some instances, partnerships were formed after only one visit with a new employer, whereas another partnership took eight meetings. Despite differences in their circumstances and needs certain common issues and types of discussions seemed to occur with the various potential employers. Some employers, although impressed by success stories achieved from partnerships with other businesses, were still not willing to form partnerships. Some employers were aware and curious about employment equity for their business when they considered the option of employing a person with a disability. Concepts such as work accommodations were explored with other employers without reference to the employment equity act.

It became clear that every interaction with a potential new employer was unique for different reasons. This impacted on the role of the job coach, and her style and approach when meeting employers for the first time. Clearly, the role of the job coach was being influenced by the responses of the employers. The supported employment programme relies on the use of marketing tools that were developed by the occupational therapist. These include

brochures and power point presentations, as well as strategies of responding to common questions that employers may have and techniques on how to manage the process of negotiating with a potential new employer. However, it was not known whether resources and techniques were effective, or how much time is required to meet and negotiate with potential employers. Similarly, the process of developing partnerships and the impact on the job coach's role was not clear. The demand for resources and time to market supported employment had to be justified. A detailed understanding of the process of developing partnerships with new employers was therefore needed.

1.7 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The rate of developing partnerships with new employers was not sufficiently meeting the demand for work placements of people with psychiatric disabilities via the supported employment programme. It became apparent that not enough is known about factors that influence employers when they are approached by the occupational therapist/job coach to establish partnerships. Opportunities for the creation of new partnerships could therefore not be maximised.

1.8 PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

Employers are influential in the successful formation of supported employment partnerships. By exploring their opinions and perceptions during the establishment of such partnerships factors could be revealed to optimise or hamper opportunities to secure supportive work placements for people with psychiatric disabilities. This study attempted to gain an in-depth understanding of the process through which businesses and supported employment programmes can establish partnerships. Findings could be used to:

- Establish guidelines for occupational therapists who practice job coaching.
- Raise awareness about the value of understanding and addressing an employer's needs during the process of establishing partnerships.
- Raise awareness in the South African business community about factors that could enhance their capacity to achieve satisfactory partnerships with supported employment programmes.

1.9 THE RESEARCH QUESTION

What factors influence the viability of establishing new partnerships within supported employment and what are the stages of development that these partnerships progress through?

1.10 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

The study aimed to explore the phenomenon of a partnership based on the salient responses of the participant employers and the job coach during discussions that explored employment of people with psychiatric disability.

The objectives:

- To elucidate employers' perceptions of the supported employment programme based at Valkenberg Hospital.
- To explore the factors that could influence employers' perceptions regarding the viability of a partnership between their businesses and the supported employment programme.
- To understand the employers preferences within a supported employment partnership.
- To understand the value employers would assign to a partnerships with the supported employment programme.

CHAPTER 2: A LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature reviewed explored the phenomenon of supported employment with reference to its validity and core approaches to practice; employer studies, and studies that reflect opinions of people with disabilities in supported employment programmes were included. Other concepts reviewed in the literature include the legislative framework in South Africa.

2.1 THE INFLUENCE OF LEGISLATION ON EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

This section of the literature review will explore views regarding the political backing of government to promote work opportunities for people with disabilities. The focus will be on legislation.

Transformation, from exclusion to inclusion into the workplace has been a global trend driven by policy and programme developments designed specifically for people with disabilities in the world of employment. Policies can provide the guidance for societies to designate resources and implement programmes that can be meaningful in the lives of people with a psychiatric disability (Stuart 2006). In the last ten years the South African government aligned policies and legislation to facilitate inclusion of people with disabilities into mainstream employment. This provides a mandate for employers to recruit and implement workplace accommodations for persons with disabilities into the workplace.

The South African Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998 legislates affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced in the past and it includes people with disabilities. The purpose of the Act is to achieve equity in the workplace through the elimination of unfair discrimination and the promotion of equal opportunities to designated

marginalised groups which include people with disabilities. This Act is further guided by the Code of Good Practice on Key Aspects of Disability in the Workplace to guide employers how to implement the employment equity act (Department of Labour 2001). Furthermore, the Department of Labour has delivered the Technical Assistance Guidelines on the Employment of People with Disabilities for employers to examine how best to implement workplace accommodations and the recruitment of people with disabilities in the workplace (Department of Labour 2003).

Similar legislative developments have been introduced at an international level. For example, the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) represents a federal mandate to end discrimination against those with disabilities and Title I of the ADA requires that employers make reasonable accommodation for employees with disabilities (Scheid 2005). Furthermore, mental health professionals were granted additional resources to assist people with severe disabilities to return to work. The 1996 Amendment to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, allocated grants to assist 27 States to develop and implement supported employment for individuals with severe disabilities (Hirsch 1989). Since then, 150 000 people have taken part in supported employment programs (Jenaro et al. 2002).

These laws have been enacted to encourage employers to provide people with disabilities equal opportunities to obtain and retain employment in the workplace. It can therefore be seen that a legislative framework has been provided; a mandate given to employers and service providers to work together (both in research and practice) to facilitate employment of people with psychiatric disabilities. The desired outcome is for employers to have comprehensive strategies in place to achieve this aim. Having employment equity committees and plans is common for employers, yet how employers go about achieving this aim of recruitment and placement of people with disabilities will vary.

The following section explores mechanisms that employers could follow to implement strategies for the recruitment and employment of people with disabilities in combined efforts with employment programmes.

2.2 EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMMES AND EMPLOYMENT IN THE OPEN LABOUR MARKET

Employment programmes are broadly classified as: vocational rehabilitation, temporary employment placement and supported employment, all of which offer routes to economic empowerment of people with psychiatric disabilities (Crowther, Marshall, Bond, & Huxley 2001). The vocational rehabilitation and temporary employment placement models emphasise pre-training and preparation of a worker prior to the phase of obtaining a job in a real work setting. Supported employment emphasises the aim away from traditional 'train and place' model of vocational rehabilitation found in day centres and sheltered workshops. Supported employment promotes the stance of "place and train" which facilitates rapid re-entry into the workplace and training of the job at the place of employment (Jenaro et al 2002). It has been found that in some instances, employment programmes could use a hybrid of all three models as a transition towards converting traditional day care vocational rehabilitation programmes into supported employment programmes (Lynch 2003; Fuller et al. 2000). The following section explores the effectiveness of supported employment practice.

2.3 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

In a recent systematic review supported employment was found to be the model of choice over other vocational rehabilitation programmes for people with psychiatric disability (Marshall, Crowther, Almaraz-Serrano, Creed, Sledge, Kluiter, Roberts, Hill, Wiersma, Bond,

Huxley, & Tyrer 2001). A randomised clinical control trial showed supported employment programmes to be successful models of creating employment opportunities for people with psychiatric disabilities (Crowther et al. 2005). Supported employment was also found to be more effective than prevocational training for assisting people with severe mental illness to obtain competitive employment (Crowther, Marshall, Bond, & Huxley 2001).

A randomised controlled trial implemented in six European countries examined the effectiveness of supported employment versus vocational rehabilitation for people with severe mental illness (Burns, Catty, Becker, Drake, Fioritti, Knapp, Lauber, Rossler, Tomov, Busschbach, White & Wiersma 2007). Over an 18 month intervention period, it was found that 55% participants with severe mental illness in supported employment obtained competitive employment compared with 28% in traditional services. The outcome of this study clearly showed the effectiveness of supported employment and reported that not only did participants in supported employment obtain competitive employment more often but they also kept their jobs for longer and worked more hours.

A study converged findings from 8 randomised controlled trials and three quasi-experimental studies to report on the effectiveness of supported employment as an evidenced-based practice for people with severe mental illness (Bond, Becker, Drake, Rapp, Meisler, Lehman, Bell & Blyler 2001). The three quasi-experimental studies evaluated day treatment programs that converted their rehabilitation to supported employment in New Hampshire and Rhode Island. It was conclusive that from all three studies, at supported employment conversion sites, showed the rate of competitive employment for people with severe mental illness had increased substantially in comparison to day treatment centres. According to Bond et al (2001), the evaluations done in quasi-experimental studies demonstrate that supported employment can be implemented in a cost effective manner in real world settings with a broad range of clients with severe mental illness. In the review of the six randomised

controlled trials, supported employment was compared with traditional vocational services. All six studies reported significant gains in obtaining and keeping employment.

Taking the results of the 8 randomised controlled trials into consideration, Bond et al (2001) suggested key components that serve as a foundation for evidence based guidelines for providing supported employment services. These are summarised as:

- The supported employment programme must be committed to the obtainment of competitive employment.
- A rapid job search approach should be used instead of train and place.
- Job placements must be client centred.
- Follow up supports must be ongoing and indefinite.
- The supported employment programme must integrate with mental health treatment teams.

These studies provide strong evidence that supported employment is an effective intervention for assisting people with psychiatric disabilities to become employed. This provides a sound reason for employers to form partnerships with supported employment programmes in order to create employment for people with disabilities, especially those with psychiatric disabilities. Implications are that occupational therapists, who are job coaches, should implement supported employment programmes to improve employment outcomes for people with psychiatric disabilities. Its practice and approaches show the value of working with employers in supported employment programmes. For example, benchmarked indicators show that forming partnerships with employers and a good understanding of business culture are vital for supported employment success (Wehman, Revell & Brook 2003). Wehman et al (2003) proposed a list of questions that should be asked:

- Does the programme develop business profiles containing business culture notations and business language?
- Does the programme contain staff development training that includes learning and uses business friendly language?
- Has the programme established a sense of urgency that is responsive to the business community?
- Does the programme do community outreach and provide training on disability awareness?
- Does the programme serve as a liaison between businesses and people with disabilities?
- Does the programme involve the business community in the organisation's policy?

It is suggested that job coaches use these questions as guidelines to identify employer satisfaction quality indicators for the success of supported employment programmes.

The following section explores the perspectives of employers and the practice of supported employment.

A lack of understanding employers' perspectives can compromise practices of employment services (provided by job coaches) and the employment outcomes for people with disabilities (Graffam, Shinkfield, Smith, & Polzin 2002). A national study conducted in Australia elucidated the factors that impacted on employers' decision to hire people with disabilities (Graffam et al. 2002). The sample included employers who had experience of hiring people with disability. The employers rated 38 factors that contributed towards their decision to employ people with disabilities. Results showed that owners of companies rated cost factors as significantly more important than human resource personnel. Cost was a more significant factor for concern in smaller companies than larger companies. Employers placed greater

significance on factors related to work performance than disability or social benefits to their company. There was a certain degree of social commitment evident and compliance with disability legislation. Conclusions from this study were that knowing that the person can do the job, rather than that he/she had a disability, influenced employers to employ a person with a disability (Graffam, Shinkfield, Smith, & Polzin 2002). The study also showed that employers wanted to form partnerships and participate in the process of planning, organizing and managing the placement. It therefore implies that service providers, such as occupational therapists, have to recognize the value of working with employers and ensuring that they are involved in the process of managing the process of integrating the person with a disability into the workplace. Furthermore, the job coach's approach must take into consideration what employers value when they consider recruitment of people with a disability. For example, employers emphasised that when recruiting a person with a disability, they needed assurance of the worker's skills. It implies that when meeting with employers, the job coach should adapt his/her approach.

A qualitative study, conducted in New Zealand, that investigated employers' attitudes about employing those with mental illness revealed that participants generally reported positive experiences (Tse 2004). The author stated that "for professionals working in mental health services, the message is to work with members of the local business community to initiate and maintain ongoing relationships with employers so their concerns can be addressed" (Tse 2004, p273). This study also gave employers an opportunity to express their needs when employing people with mental illness. These included gaining information on the persons' health needs, having access to rehabilitation professionals and maintaining a good contingency plan. Conclusions from this study draw attention to strengthening of employer relationships through strategies such as ongoing contact and support and information sharing with employers when forming partnerships that will result in employing people with psychiatric disabilities.

One study highlighted that employers are not sufficiently informed of what it is that a job coach could offer them (Unger & Kregel 2003). Human resource professionals and supervisors were surveyed to determine the extent to which businesses were aware of, and utilised, the vast array of workplace supports available (Unger & Kregel 2003). The study reflected that rehabilitation service providers and employment support providers are not effectively marketing the wealth of services they could provide to the business community. It shows the importance for job coaches to ensure that they are effectively communicating their valued role for employers to utilise their skills when employing a person with a disability.

Peck & Kirkbride (2001) propose that employment specialists must develop the same sensitivity to the needs of business as they do to people with disabilities. This major shift in the field of rehabilitation could result in more people with disabilities becoming employed, and advancing in the field of business (Peck & Kirkbride 2001). The authors based their opinion on case study experiences with employers. These authors cite four fears most common to employers when considering employment of persons with disability. These fears include:

- High cost associated with hiring;
- Being stuck with an employee who cannot perform the essential functions of the job.
- The notion of employees with disability as damaged goods (Peck & Kirkbride 2001).

Suggestions of dealing with these fears were to educate the employer, to encourage the employer to use the skills of the job coach when it comes to job matching and to emphasise the skills this person has to offer the company (Peck & Kirkbride 2001). They stated that although job coaches have a lot to offer employers, they actually know very little about business in terms of business culture, management, and etiquette. Conclusions by Peck and Kirkbride (2001) show that the job coach role can be more effective if they develop a more sensitive approach to business needs such as:

- To develop a business sense in terms of what employers need.
- To understand how businesses function.

- To look for opportunities of how professionals could be of assistance to the business (Peck & Kirkbride 2001).

In a paper that examined the status and growth of supported employment in the United States, over the past two decades, a decline in the rate of growth of supported employment programmes was found (Cimera 2006). Federal funding allocated to people with disabilities in supported employment programmes had increased dramatically. Suggestions were made for improving the growth of supported employment. It was established that employers had been neglected and that no systematic attempt was made to explore the monetary benefits and costs associated with hiring supported employees for employers. It was suggested that to effectively promote supported employment within the business world, more must be known about the monetary outcomes of hiring supported employees (Cimera 2006).

Typical employer concerns, elucidated from a focus group, showed that fear and negative attitudes prevented them from hiring people with disabilities (Van Lieshout 2001). Participants believed that qualified people with disabilities are difficult to find and that employers need 'on site' help to solve problems during implementation (Van Lieshout 2001). The same author held the view that disability specialists have not focused on the needs of employers and that employers have not been included to participate in decisions-making. Suggestions were made how to narrow the gap between employers and disability specialists.

Two studies, based on surveys with employers, showed that employers perceived success when there was a match between the employee with a disability and the job. Both studies emphasised that employers needed to be part of the job match process (Smith et al. 2004; Westmoreland et al. 2002). Smith et al (2004) further found a correlation between future hiring intentions and positive experiences with employees with a disability.

Mast et al (2001) recognised the lack of effective tools to promote job development and argued that a need existed for techniques and strategies to bridge the gap between high cost, emotionally charged sales techniques and the employment needs of persons with disabilities. Field-testing was completed in 25 programmes using portfolio presentations as a marketing tool with employers. Each of the 25 programmes completed ten presentations to which employers responded with a feedback form. The results showed portfolio presentations to be an effective marketing tool for job developers. Employers' understanding and awareness of people with disability improved, but they remained hesitant to comment on future hiring intentions within their businesses. The conclusion was that having a good marketing strategy, combined with the use of presentation portfolios is a good start to educating the employer about the supported employment agency and other negotiated jobs as well as presenting a new worker to employers. The unique feature of these portfolios showed that photographs gave employers an opportunity to picture a person with disability in their own workplace.

An intervention, designed to take into account the social nature of the accommodation process, was pilot tested with 12 workers with a psychiatric diagnosis and their work group (job coach and or co workers or family members) (Gates 2000). Although the findings were limited by a small sample size, these suggested that providers must be willing and able to enter the workplace environment. It emphasised that both providers and workers with disabilities must come to understand the risks and benefits of disclosure and when the decision is made to disclose, there must be a formal structured plan for carrying it out. Gates (2000) provided affirmation of the value of including employers during the disability management process of a worker with a disability with special attention given to disclosure and education strategies with the employer.

An international explorative, descriptive study with multi-site investigation of reasonable workplace accommodations for individuals with psychiatric disabilities involved 4 supported employment programs in which 191 clients with psychiatric disability participated (MacDonald-Wilson, Rogers, Massaro, Lyass, & Crean 2002). The study looked at the range of accommodations and specific characteristics of employees, employers and service provider agencies involved in developing reasonable accommodations. The key accommodations needed specifically for people with psychiatric disability were found to involve human assistance of some kind, usually a job coach; extra supervision and training; modifying job duties. Common accommodations were classified as: flexible scheduling, allowing the presence of a job coach; job modification or restructuring; facilitating communication on the job; providing training to staff or supervisors; modifying supervision. It highlighted that the job coach played a pivotal role to identify, acquire and implement these accommodations. To acquire these accommodations included working alongside employers (MacDonald-Wilson, Rogers, Massaro, Lyass, & Crean 2002).

The interrelationship between support and outcomes in supported employment contexts of three different countries was investigated in a study that included 448 participants involved in supported employment (Jenaro, Mank, Bottomley, Doose, & Tuckerman 2002). The results provided evidence that less natural support strategies at the start of working corresponded with less typical job outcomes. Also, more typical outcome during the job development process was found to enhance economical, social and performance outcomes for supported employees (Van Lieshout 2001). The study recommended the need to encourage supervisors and co workers to be a part of providing support to supported employment employees (Van Lieshout 2001).

Personal and environmental factors that impact on the vocational outcome of people with disabilities were explored (Blitz & Mechanic 2005). Job coaching activities were identified as

facilitators and a means to overcome barriers to employment. Best practice guidelines were formulated and the results showed that key job coach interventions were education, training, onsite support and arranging flexible work hours with employers (Blitz & Mechanic 2005).

A qualitative study that involved four supported employment organisations explored the process and outcomes of natural workplace supports within supported employment agencies (Rogan, Banks, & Herbein 2003). In-depth interviews were held with 129 stakeholders including employees, co workers, supervisors, service providers and one parent.

Implications of the study showed that the role of service providers (job coaches) changed over the years from primarily offering a service to employers to the role of facilitating a process with employers to hire, train and support a diverse workforce. The concept of using natural workplace supports were considered to enhance the employment outcomes of the supported employment employees (Rogan, Banks, & Herbein 2003). The need to build and develop relationships with employers was considered important. Furthermore, it highlighted the importance for a job coach to understanding a workplace to such an extent that the option of natural supports could be implemented.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1. RESEARCH APPROACH

The researcher followed a qualitative research approach to conduct the study. Qualitative inquiry is guided by certain key assumptions that guide researchers to develop their studies; these include that;

- research data that emerge are described,
- observed phenomena are discovered,
- data is interpreted rather than generalised and
- empirical soundness is based on trustworthiness rather than reliability and validity (McReynolds, Koch, & Rumrill 2001).

In keeping with these assumptions, the researcher chose to study a *phenomenon* which in this study was observing the process of forming a partnership between businesses and a supported employment program. It allowed for the phenomenon to be fully explored by describing, understanding and identifying the unfolding process. The subjective opinion of the participant employers and the researcher's observations were reflected upon and interpreted.

The research was informed by an *interpretive inquiry* approach. Qualitative research is a form of inquiry in which the researcher makes an interpretation of what they see, hear and understand based on the *epistemological assumption* that the researcher gets close to the participants being studied and in so doing conducts the research in natural settings where the participants live or work (Creswell 1998). In keeping with this, the researcher chose to do

the research in the natural workplace setting of participant employers who were being studied.

3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

This research study used a collective case study design. Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system(a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information and then reports a case description and case based themes (Creswell 1998). This research design allowed for the researcher to explore an issue (the process of developing partnerships) through multiple (three) cases within a bounded system related to a particular context (i.e. a business setting). Case studies can be distinguished from other traditions of inquiry by examining the intent of study. In a collective case study, for example, the researcher intends to explore an issue but the method of inquiry is selected from multiple cases (Creswell 1998). The use of multiple perspectives obtained via three cases had allowed the researcher to identify complex interactions of various factors that had influenced a single issue (which is the process of developing partnerships).

3.3 THE RESEARCHER

The researcher is a 34 year old woman who has been practicing as an occupational therapist since 1996, for eleven years, at Valkenberg Psychiatric Hospital. She has primarily been working with people with psychiatric disabilities in the area of work and forensic rehabilitation. The researcher initiated the supported employment programme at Valkenberg Hospital. She is the programme manager and provider of job coaching services to employers

and people with psychiatric disabilities in the supported employment programme. Five years ago, the researcher also worked part time for a non profit organisation, called Business for Good, where she co-coordinated a training program for job coaching in Cape Town, South Africa.

3.4. PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY

In qualitative research the selection of participants should closely represent the group that needs to be understood (Creswell 1998). Criterion sampling is a form of purposive sampling and refers to all cases that meet some criterion and is useful for quality assurance (Creswell 1998). This method was used.

A database of potential businesses as future partners had been compiled. It served as the employer contact list for the supported employment programme based at Valkenberg Hospital and included people with psychiatric disabilities' job preferences and work geographical areas of choice. The employer database of the supported employment programme served as the source to apply purposive sampling and select the participants. The following criteria guided the selection of participants:

They had to be directly responsible for making the decision to recruit workers into the business. Therefore, participants chosen were managers, human resource personnel or owners of businesses. Each participant employer varied in their responsible role within each business.

The businesses differed in size, i.e. small, medium and micro enterprises and this showed variances in recruitment strategies and business management structures. The businesses also differed in the type of commercial activity, which affected the nature of job vacancies

that could become available. Each participant employer had little or no experience of disability in the workplace which allowed for diversity in their knowledge, attitude and expertise of the concept of creating employment for a person(s) with disabilities in their place of work.

A pseudonym was allocated to each of the three participant businesses: The Car Wash Place; The Fisheries Place and The Garden Place.

3.5. A DESCRIPTION OF THE CASES

The Car Wash Place

The manager of the Car Wash Place was interviewed. This micro company employed nine employees, some of whom on part time contracts. Recruitment of new workers in this company occurred informally, for example, the last new employee was recruited into the company after he simply asked for a job.

Gaining entry into the company for the purpose of research was an easy process because the manager had an open and friendly attitude; he made the time to participate in the research process. Although ultimate authority to enter into a partnership rested with the owner, the manager confirmed that he would be supported by his boss to consider the potential partnership. The manager had no prior experience of employing people with psychiatric disability and had never heard of the supported employment programme. By the end of the research process, a work trial placement had been put in place at The Car Wash Place.

The Fisheries Place

The Fisheries Place could be classified as a micro business. The owner, who was also the manager, had four full time employees; all of whom had been working there for nine years. This employer had regular contact with people with psychiatric disabilities who were customers of the shop. He also had a contract with a temporary employment placement agency to have a person with a psychiatric disability clean the windows of his shop once a month. Gaining entry into the company, for the purpose of research, was an easy process because the owner was willing to participate in the research process. The research interviews had to occur after work hours when the shop was closed to customers because this was the only time of day that this employer had time available to have a focused discussion with the job coach. By the end of the research process, the owner was willing to have a trial placement but unfortunately the supported employment programme did not respond speedily enough to recruit a worker for him and he then employed another person with a psychiatric disability. However, he assisted in marketing and networking the supported employment programme by creating contacts with potential employers who were the suppliers to his business. He also participated in writing an article about the supported employment programme for the local community newspaper. Prior to this research study, the employer had awareness about the topic of people with psychiatric disability and employment but he did not know about the supported employment programme.

The Garden Place.

The Garden Place was a corporate company in the retail and garden industry. Two managers of The Garden Place shop were interviewed. The human resource manager, based at the company head office, was also interviewed. This national company had many different branches in the garden industry related to retail and manufacturing of plants. All

recruitment of new employees occurred under strict employment procedures via the Human Resource Department. Gaining entry into the company for the purpose of research was not an easy process. Although both the managers and the human resource manager were very keen to participate in the research, they struggled to put the time aside for the research interviews. The interviews took place during work hours with many interruptions of phone calls or queries. It emerged that the decision making process of a partnership had to occur via three levels of management. After the initial research interviews the managers of the shop recommended that it would be appropriate to refer the partnership proposal to their human resource manager. The human resource manager approved the potential establishment of a partnership. It was recommended that the process of negotiation for a partnership would take place at a director level with the submission of a written proposal and a presentation to the Board of Directors. The human resource manager did not want to include consultation with the Board of Directors as part of the research process and she recommended that it be continued at a later time.

3.6. DATA GATHERING PROCESS

Qualitative research involves the collection of a variety of empirical materials such as case studies; interviews or texts that describe meanings in individual's lives (Denzin & Lincoln 2003). This research study had been informed from data collated from case study descriptions, in-depth interviews and texts from the participant employers.

3.6.1 In-depth Interviewing

Semi structured individual interviews with each employer were used as the primary method of data generation. Semi structured interviews enable insight into the logic by which

participants interpret their lives and permit a glimpse into their life worlds and daily experiences (Gwyer et al. 2004; Mason 1996).

The researcher gathered data using in depth interviews with the participants. The primary focus of the interviews was to determine businesses' needs, attitudes, ideas and questions about establishing a partnership with a supported employment programme, thereby determining the factors that would impact on the process of establishing an employment opportunity for people with psychiatric disability.

Each participant was interviewed for four hours over a period of four scheduled meeting times. The venues were chosen by the participants and interviews were subsequently held at the workplace. The participants were asked to describe how they perceived a potential partnership with the supported employment programme to occur in their business. Their own personal values, attitudes, knowledge and experience of working with people with psychiatric disability in the workplace were considered.

The experience of interviewing an owner, three managers and one human resource officer of three companies included informing them about the supported employment programme, followed by eliciting their points of view on the subject of establishing a partnership between their business and the supported employment programme.

An interview guide of themes and topics related to the research question was prepared for each interview. This was used to trigger open ended questions and to encourage responses from participants. A consent form was signed prior to the start of the first interview with the participants. Each interview was recorded and transcribed to generate data.

3.6.2 Journal entries

The researcher kept a journal for reflection on the interview experience. It was used to record personal biases, ideas and impressions. It assisted the researcher to further identify emerging themes and it was used to assist data analysis.

3.7. DATA ANALYSIS

Creswell (1998) explained the complexity of qualitative data analysis processes when he said one enters with data of text and exits with an account of a narrative. The researcher then engages in analytical circles rather a linear approach (Creswell 1998). These descriptions hold true for this research study.

Each interview was tape recorded and transcribed by the researcher in order to present information in written format. After each interview that had been transcribed the researcher immersed herself in the data by reading and re-reading the transcript and jotting down notes in the margins of text. These memos were short phrases, ideas or key concepts that occurred to the researcher. From this stage the researcher started the process of reducing data. An important approach to reducing data is to develop codes or categories and to sort text (Creswell 1998). The researcher then set about organizing data into themes using a coding system. Each case had its own set of codes and categories with summary descriptions of each case to produce an explanation of the process that was being observed as well as the perceptions of employers as they related to the research questions.

Data were confirmed with the participants to ensure accuracy of interpretation. This was done throughout the research process by verbally presenting summaries of interview data to

the participants to verify that the summary reflects a true account. This ensured credibility of the study.

The three case studies were then compared and cross case summaries, themes and categories were produced into five overarching themes with sub categories. This constituted the first level of analysis which reflected employers' perceptions.

The researcher simultaneously and consequently continued to engage in the second phase of analysis by reviewing and re reviewing the data so that the process of forming a partnership could be described and uncovered from the first set of analysed data. A means of cross-referencing interpretation of information during data analysis was done by extensive discussion and review of the data and findings between the researcher and the research supervisor to ensure that an agreement was reached about the data analysed. Search for new data ceased when no new insights emerged. This ensured confirmability of the study.

3.8. ENSURING RESEARCH RIGOUR

Credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability were used to establish trustworthiness in qualitative research studies.

3.8.1 Confirmability

The meanings emerging from data have to be tested for their plausibility, their sturdiness, and their confirmability; that is their validity (Miles & Huberman 1994). Confirmability for this study was achieved by ensuring that the researcher had implemented a procedure to check and recheck conclusions and summaries that were drawn. Participants of the study were

given summaries and conclusions of data to verify the plausibility of information. The researcher had also conferred with her supervisor in reflective discussions. This had confirmed ideas and interpretations of themes and categories, thus the researcher had ensured **credibility** of information gained.

3.8.2 Dependability

The underlying issue here is whether the study is consistent and reasonably stable over time (Miles & Huberman 1994). The researcher ensured that the methodology of the study accurately documented to the extent that a clear paper trail of all steps and procedures were captured. In qualitative research, established techniques are used to ensure accuracy of research findings which include audit trails, field notes, member checking and memos (McReynolds, Koch, & Rumrill 2001). Field notes, also known as thick descriptions were kept to ensure that data was not lost in the process of data analysis. Memos were used to record the researcher's personal biases, ideas and impressions; this ensured that perspective was not lost.

3.8.3 Transferability

Transferability was established in this study because the researcher had presented information rich descriptive data which included the context and circumstances of each case that was explored. This had allowed for the findings to be plausible and relevant in similar situations to the context of this research study.

3.9. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical approval was obtained from the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences Research Portfolio and the Faculty of Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee of the University of Cape Town. The proposal was also submitted to the medical superintendent of Valkenberg Psychiatric Hospital.

Each participant was briefed on the purpose and nature of the study. Each participant was told why they were being asked to participate in the study and was provided with an explanation of the methods of data collection that would be used. Each participant was asked how data could be used in future, such as for presentation and publication.

Informed consent was obtained from all the participants via a consent form prior to the start of the research presentations and interviews. The consent document included a statement of disclaimer which stated that participants could refuse to participate in the study or withdraw at any time without prejudice to themselves or others and without penalty or fear for their future business image.

Information recorded from subjects was kept in a secure location with access restricted to the researcher and supervisor. The participants were ensured that information obtained in connection with the study will be disclosed only with the participants' permission.

The role of the researcher versus the role of the job coach had to be explored to avoid role confusion. The researcher reassured the participants via the consent form that the research will not impact on any information they wish to share about potential issues related to the current relationship or future relationship with the supported employment programme.

3.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study population included participant employers from three different businesses. It was found that all participants were willing to participate in the study; however the strength of their commitment is not yet known. The stage of actually implementing a partnership fell beyond the scope of the study

This scope of the study allowed for only three case studies. The opinion of employers who were not interested in establishing a partnership was not included in these three case studies. This limits the study findings in terms of understanding in-depth reasons why employers might not consider the supported employment partnerships to be a viable option. However, the findings revealed certain factors identified by participants as indicators that would potentially prevent them from establishing partnerships.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS OBTAINED DURING FIRST LEVEL ANALYSIS

This chapter documents the findings of the first level analysis which elucidated participants' perceptions.

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The participants' perceptions were analysed and synthesised into five overarching themes. Each theme represented key factors that needed to be explored by employers during the process of considering the formation of a partnership with their business. The five themes are supported by categories which illustrate expanded information relevant to each theme. The underlying categories should be viewed as factors that were considered as a need, benefit, concern or risk to the business when exploring the partnership as a real option for their business.

Theme one: Business associated factors

Theme two: Employment and disability factors

Theme three: Social factors

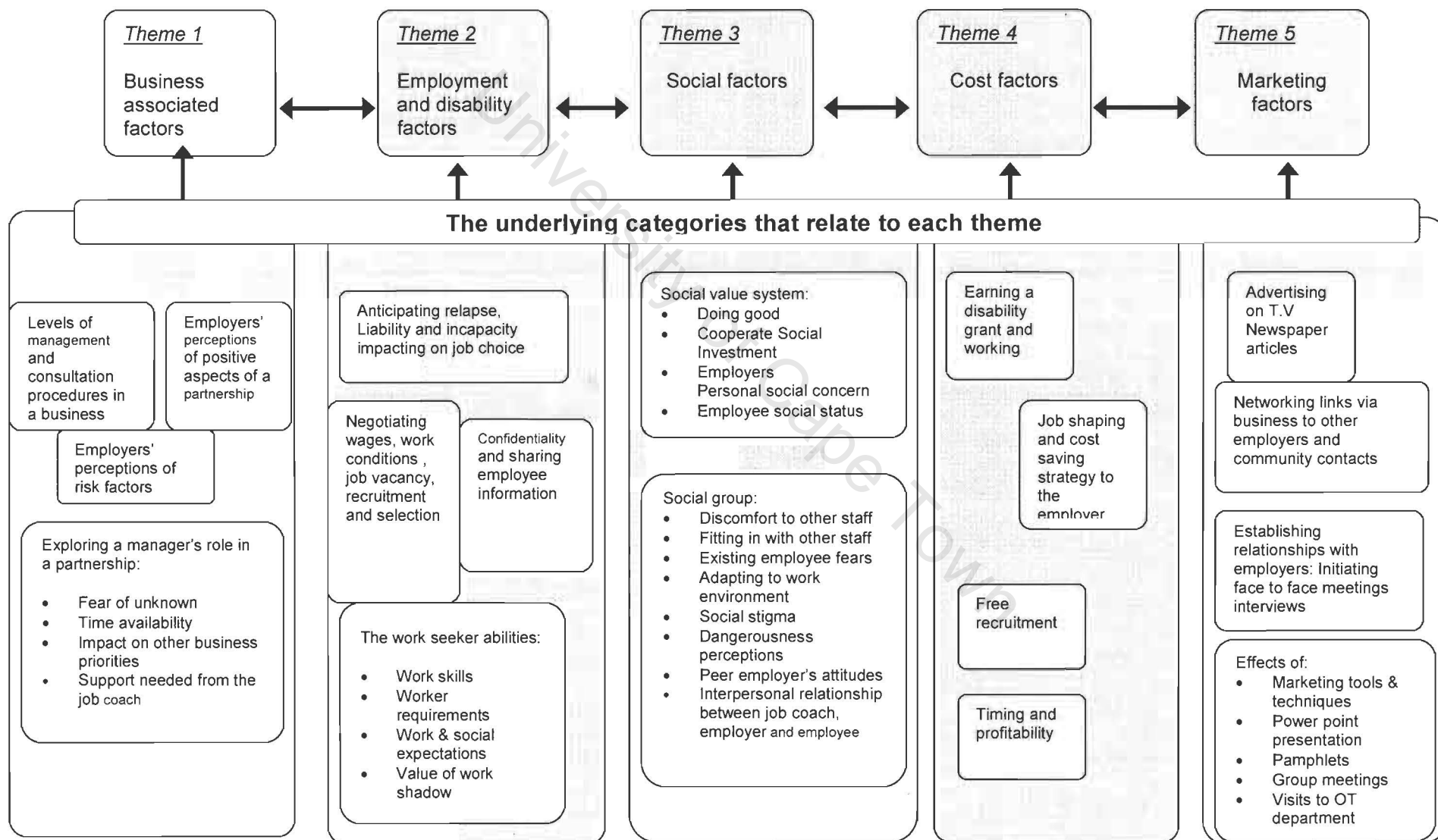
Theme four: Cost factors

Theme Five: Marketing factors

Table 1 contains a diagram formulated to illustrate the five themes and underlying categories.

Table 1: Diagram illustrating employer perceptions of factors that will influence the formation of a partnership

Factors explored by the participant employers and the job coach about the formation of a partnership between a supported employment programme and a business to create employment for people with psychiatric disabilities



4.2. THEME 1: BUSINESS ASSOCIATED FACTORS

Business associated factors were those that the participants and the job coach explored, described and observed in relation to issues in a business that could be affected by, or affect, the formation of a partnership. These business associated factors were identified as: 1) the influence of a business's management structure, 2) a business's core priorities that affect business practices and 3) the capacity of a business to form and implement a partnership. The following categories represented participants' perceptions that emerged from discussions with them.

4.2.1. Levels of management and consultation procedures to follow

Identifying the stakeholder(s) of the company was an important initial step, because it created the opportunity to continue the process of exploring the potential partnership as a real option for these three companies. By understanding management structures of a company, it emerged that each business will have their own particular structures, which have to be understood by the job coach in order for a partnership to be considered.

The manager of the Car Wash Place was the first person available to enter into consultation about the partnership. By understanding his level of authority to make decisions in the business it was revealed that the existing management structures would affect who in the business will be liaising with the job coach to make the decision to form a partnership. This point is illustrated by the comment captured by the manager of the Car Wash Place:

“...if I can see my way clear after we go through all this and the interview and whatever comes next I will make a point of discussing it with the owners in Johannesburg in getting their permission and I will then advise you.”

This statement also signified that both the manager and the owner were crucial decision making partners to represent this business in discussions about the formation of a partnership. By exploring the communication system between the manager and the owner, it was revealed that the manager would become the main person to start the process of talking about forming a partnership with the job coach because this was the usual process of making decisions in this company. The manager shared a trusted relationship with the owner of the business, which added to the integrity of his authority to engage in discussions about forming a partnership:

“If we go through all this, and it turns out that you now come to me and say to me right I’ve got Charlie and I’m bringing Charlie along in three weeks time, I’ll immediately go to my boss and say that this is what I’m doing , can I continue, you know what I mean. I can’t see him saying no you know what I mean because he would take my word for it [Researcher]: He goes on your recommendation? [Participant]: Yes, 100 percent. He leaves me alone entirely. If I have a problem, I contact him. If I don’t have a problem, I don’t.”

Since ultimate authority to allow the partnership to occur meant that the owner of the company would also need to be consulted, I explored the best way of approaching the owner from the manager’s perspective and he responded:

“Oh, yes. I would pass on to him, precisely what we have been talking about... So, I would give him the full story.”

This meant that gaining access to the owner of the company would primarily be via the manager. It became obvious that negotiating a partnership will need to take place within the business management structures in terms of whom to be consulting with and in terms of how consultations will occur.

At the Fisheries Place it became evident from our first conversation that the manager was also the owner of the business. He had the ultimate authority to consider the potential of a partnership as an option for his business. Therefore the process of exploring the partnership started immediately and stayed only between the job coach and one person in this business.

At the Garden Place, the first person who became available to enter into discussion about the partnership was the manager of the Garden shop. Two managers of the garden shop were interviewed on the advice of the senior manager. Because of their limited time available to participate in the research, they thought it would be better if they both sat in on the second interview in the event that one of them needed to attend to business. When the managers grasped the potential of the partnership, they started to classify the business's management structure and the process of how a decision about a potential partnership would be considered in this company:

" We are a small part of a monster company. From an industry point of view, I would be very positive about the whole thing... I just want to say to you that if it actually happened. You see a whole thing like this kind of programme, would have to happen at another level as well... We're getting the gist of the thing, a thing like this, would happen on a not just on a retail business, at the Garden Centre. A thing like this I would say would go through someone like Nancy (the human resource manager) who would sit down and look at the whole programme and then she would make the

recommendations to the board or the managing director and it will be a very formal arrangement”.

Engaging with these managers was the first opportunity of introducing the partnership to this corporate business. It emerged that consultation for a potential partnership would have to occur via three levels of management, which were the managers of the Garden centre shop, the human resource manager and the directors of the company. The human resource manager also emphasised that one would have to negotiate for a partnership differently at each level:

” I would prefer to look at the research side and the implementation side separately because as I explained in our company if we are going to implement it we need to take it seriously and we need to get all the information and go and present it to the directors. It would most likely be that you need to put a proposal forward, preferably on paper so they would know what’s it about and then possibly also come and do the power point presentation to explain what’s its about and then privately we will look at the pro’s and cons for the company, see if we can afford it, whether its viable to bring in etc etc and then a decision will be made and that decision will be made at director level. It’s definitely something that can be looked at”.

The three cases presented three different situations of identifying those who in a company have the authority to consider and implement a partnership. These were determined largely by management structures and related to who took responsibility and made decisions within each company. The initiation of a partnership varied from speaking to a manager who has some decision-making authority, to engaging directly with the owner (who also fulfilled a managerial role), or to having to interact across various levels of management in a corporate environment.

4.2.2. The positive aspects of a partnership as perceived by a business

The factors that contributed to participants' positive attitude arose out of a combination of issues that originated from each of their personal values and their companies' priorities. From a humane perspective, they felt it would allow them to "do good" and "be helpful" to assist people with psychiatric disability to become employed. From a social investment perspective a partnership would allow the company to reach their prescribed employment equity numbers and invest in a social responsibility programme with a clear vision and achievable aims. The benefit of free recruitment to the business via the programme and the cost of minimal wages to employees who receive a disability grant were considered a benefit for one of the participants. The idea of establishing a partnership from a humane and business perspective is captured from one of the participants as:

"I'm not speaking as a business person, I'm speaking as a human being (laughing) ...and I would very much like to be able to help in some way from this point of view... And I would like in some way to be able to do this".

For him the business benefit flowed from the availability of the job coach to assist the employer with recruitment of a new employee for long term employment. For this manager, the process of recruitment offered via the partnership was seen as a good alternative option to his current method of recruiting workers into the business, as he stated:

"On the contrary. I would say this is a better idea because I'm going to act on your advice and also on your report of that person and also my meeting with them. So I would say this is far better than my doing an interview of a body that comes in and I know nothing about him.... Oh, absolutely. Most certainly, it's much more..."

The owner of The Fisheries Place understood the value and importance of creating work for a person with a psychiatric disability:

"It's a very, it's a great idea. (Referring to the supported employment programme)... I mean since I've been here in Observatory, for the last nine years now, these people need to get out to the workforce... yes it (work) gives them meaning and it makes them (people with psychiatric disability) feel a err like they are socially accepted".

In response to how he would talk about the supported employment programme to other employers, a social and business perspective emerged:

"... well I would say, basically because labour is so expensive, these people are getting a disability. Correct. So... yah, as such, we(employers) are not going to make misuse of them, but if we can use them for a third of the day, that you don't have to pay them at the end of the month, that much as a full days work...Yes, I would definitely recommend you. Because I feel that we also, everyone, not only firms and everyone else, everyone in society should know about them (people with psychiatric disability) and don't say oh there goes a mad thing! You know something like that. They should all know, and what hasn't been done, enough I feel is the normal people to be made aware, of what is actually wrong with them (people with psychiatric disability)".

The business benefit for this employer was the flexibility of creating a job for only a few hours a day thereby allowing him to afford to pay wages for a new employee.

The Garden Place human resource manager shared that, as a corporate company, a partnership could be a benefit in terms of employment equity and social investment:

"I mean I deal with employment equity and from employment equity point of view this helps and it sounds really good... I have no problem employing more people with disabilities because first of all it's good for us as a company for our numbers or whatever the case may be and also I think its just good, it's a good social thing to do... I really believe it's a good initiative because its something that's workable and both parties benefit. I mean if you think of it from a selfish point of view, companies are getting an employee, a person who is able to do a job fine when he is fine for a minimal amount of money or at minimal cost to the company..."

4.2.3. Identifying employers' perception of risk factors that could affect the formation of a partnership

It became apparent that the process of anticipating risks in the decision making process of the partnership is a routine business procedure for businesses:

" if anything happens, employers have great liability with regards to employees who don't perform their work and I mean we need to then say to the employee: 'Look you are either dismissed because of incapacity or misconduct or whatever', but incapacity is usually a hard one. Because if they are unable to do their job, especially if the inability is a mental one, we need to prove that and if they take it further, you know, it causes the company to be put in a bad light unnecessarily".

As indicated above, a business could be concerned with the consequences of dismissing a person, due to incapacity, which can adversely affect the company's image, with long term ill

effects for their business. The manager above also shared her concern about the potential risk factor to the supported employment programme by considering the consequences of a partnership that is not successful:

“Now I mean obviously to be part of a programme like this, would be a good social responsibility, it would be a good social investment that the company makes but like you saying, the commitment and the risk needs to be considered because you can actually end up in a situation. Your company, the supported employment project could end up in a situation where because of one mistake with over commitment and huge risk for an employer, other employers will not want to buy into the idea .You know what I’m trying to say, it’s just something to consider. Hmm, look obviously there are certain companies who will be more willing to take certain risks than others”.

This participant employer felt that the perceived success of the supported employment programme could be a factor that will influence other employers to engage in a partnership.

For the Garden Place corporate business, a potential risk factor was investing in a new worker who would be at risk of not performing his job due to psychiatric disability, especially if that worker was prone to relapse, and therefore have a reduced capacity for the work:

“Hmm, so what happens if hmm, because I’m assuming that if for example somebody with bipolar or schizophrenia can kick in at any point so they might be fine for a year or two and then suddenly. Now what happens in those cases, what are the risks that the company takes? “

This triggered consideration about continuity of the job and having to invest time retraining a new person again if the position was an integral one, which resulted in a decision to consider jobs that would be less affected should changes need to occur:

"...but from a corporate point of view, you know, corporates have a company to run and hmm so you employ somebody and they are fine for say a year and then something happens and they end up back in hospital. If they are fulfilling an integral role for example they might need to be replaced and not for short periods. You know what I mean because that person who will replace them may need to learn the job from the start. What I'm also trying to say is that perhaps this would be easier in your more general types of jobs; you know what I'm saying. Hmm, like a general worker, somebody like that".

Anticipating the risk of a person relapsing at work, the manager thought about the consequences of the loss of productivity to the company. This led the manager to consider an alternative work position that could reduce the risk of potentially losing a worker due to illness. Her process of decision making was followed by identifying a risk, perceiving the potential impact to the company in terms of productivity and the business's image, and then proceeding to think of a new strategy that could accommodate the risk by creating a flexible work environment. It became clear that the benefits at this stage had outweighed the perceived risks because she continued to strategise a way of implementing the partnership.

The owner of the Fisheries Place went through a similar process when he wanted to know about the consequence of relapse: **"...The only, now what happens if the guy gets ill?"** By observing the employer's response to a work trial placement, it became evident that he would be willing to take the risk: **" No, that is the only way to do it. To do a trial period..."** But he would implement the process gradually so that he did not feel committed to working

with a person who was not suitable: ***“No, it would benefit me. Otherwise, I will almost feel obligated to take that person on and even if he couldn’t cope properly with the work”.***

For this employer, exploring the concept of the trial placement was the beginning phase of implementing the placement process at a stage where the benefits outweighed the perceived risks. The fact that the employer would start with a trial placement is not necessarily the sign of complete commitment to the partnership. For this employer, grading the establishment of a partnership was a preferred choice.

The manager of the Car Wash Place did not talk about the perceived risks. His method of taking on any new worker in the company was the same he would apply to the new worker of the supported employment programme. This included a one day trial:

“...and therefore, I would be careful and I would be considerate. So as far as I’m concerned, yes, hmm, he or she would need to be on a part time basis until things go wrong. That’s until things come to a head. [Researcher]: which is what you have done in any case with anybody in your company? [Participant]: yes, oh yes, one hundred percent. Yes”.

4.2.4 Exploring a manager’s skills and requirements to participate in the partnership

A manager’s role within the partnership was explored in the context of identifying the person taking the responsibility to supervise and work with the person with psychiatric disability in addition to his/her current work responsibilities. It became evident that for the implementation of the partnership to occur, the manager’s role would have to change in

some way. The following concerns, needs and suggested strategic planning were extracted from the interviews.

4.2.4.1. Employers fear the unknown and they need support

The manager of the Garden Place expressed the view that, although managers may be interested to be a part of a partnership, they will need support because they are unsure what to expect. This presented a potential concern that could be addressed with support provided by the job coach:

“Well I think that the fact that you are there as backup is reassuring ‘cause you, you know everyone is keen to do the whole community spirit thing and employ people who need help like that hmm but I think most people are a little bit weary with they don’t quite know what they are going to be dealing with err and having you there as a go between is a very good idea.”

It became clear that some managers may be concerned when entering into a partnership because the experience is new, and they may not be sure what to expect. For the Garden Place manager, the opportunity to have the job coach available as a **“back up”** during the process of implementation was reassuring.

4.2.4.2. The influence of previous experience of working with a person with a disability and identifying the need for ongoing support and education

Both managers at the Garden Place had the experience of supervising a person with a disability. Their perception of what to expect within the partnership was influenced by this experience:

“Hmm, we got this fellow here, and there is no backup from his parents we they don’t let us know where he is coming from. Hmm, so we spent three years feeling our own way through it and basically working in the dark. We were like amateur psychologists... And it still isn’t, I mean we battle sometimes”.

This manager identified that it has been challenging for them to work without any support or guidance. Besides the lack of support, she also expressed a need to have some information about the person entering into employment which seemed to have provoked some anxiety:

“Hmm, and you don’t really know if you are getting a previous axe murderer or whatever (nervous laughter), I mean just to be facetious...”

When asked to consider what type of information would be helpful for her to know after her experience of working with a person with a disability the manager responded:

”Hmm, obviously we don’t need to know the intimate details of his condition, hmm I think a rough idea of what is wrong with him, hmm, what his limitations are and whether he has any emotional hang ups or no go zones. You know, I mean you can walk up to somebody and say so and so like you got long hair and that might just set him off”.

It was obvious that the manager had wanted more information about an employee with a psychiatric disability than she would have required about other employees without a disability, but had realised that this information may actually be private. However she did have a need to have a basic understanding of the person's illness and guidance on how to handle him/her, in the interest of making the partnership a success.

Providing relevant information about the potential new employee may be important to advance the partnership. Uncovering the manager's experience of working with a person with a disability showed how the employer may have certain expectations of a potential partnership. Understanding an employer's expectations of a partnership could therefore assist the process of negotiation.

4.2.4.3. The manager's time and role to provide support to the worker

The manager of the Fisheries Place acknowledged that support to the worker is vital but that he will not have the time to do it because of the nature of his job requirements. This presented a potential concern for the manager due to his time constraints.

"It will have to be (referring to support in the workplace is important). Cause, I can't give the support that is needed. I'm full time at the till or the phones".

Learning from the employer's response, he acknowledged the need for support to the employee during the placement process, but indicated that he could not personally provide support to the worker since he is constantly occupied with his work tasks during a working day. Valuing the need for support to be provided by the job coach was uncovered as another expectation of the role of job coach role from the employer's perspective. For this employer, the concept of natural support was perceived as difficult because of his time constraints.

4.2.4.4. Choosing a manager with the right requirements

Besides considering what could be offered to managers to prepare them for the partnership, some thought was given to choosing the type of manager that may be suitable for the partnership. For the Garden Place, the possibility of choosing a suitable manager was

feasible since it was a big company with many options available to choose with whom, and where, the people with psychiatric disability could be placed. The human resource manager gave some consideration to requirements of a manager while considering potential jobs that people with psychiatric disability could do in their company. This demonstrated concern that some managers may not be prepared to manage a placement made via the partnership:

“And is there any type of manager that they should work for?... And hmm, the manager in terms of. Well I mean you do get a lot of managers who can be difficult and who expect a lot and then you get managers that might be a bit more flexible. Now I mean of the whole thing that is the partnership will be explained to the manager, but I mean some people, their personalities are just like that which is what makes them good managers sometimes. So, would there, is there any sort of some requirements with regards to that? I mean if you are going to place somebody it may be better to place that person with someone who is not very stooped”.

This emphasized that all managers who will be working directly with a person with a psychiatric disability will differ because of their unique attributes, skills and personality. Choosing the most suitable manager is a critical issue. The same could not be applied to smaller companies since they may only have one manager within the company.

4.2.4.5. The manager's need to be supported to deal with a worker who may need specialised care

The manager at the Car Wash Place recognised the need for support or special care to the person with a psychiatric disability.

"I would say... Yes, the thing I like is that that person whom you are counselling or who is being counselled by somebody else, at Valkenberg or wherever it is, that person can go back and ask for help. If he needs help. Cause obviously, he can't ask me. He can't discuss his personal problems whatever they may be from the psychological point of view, I couldn't be of help. Do you know what I mean".

He recognized that he would not be able to assist the person with a psychiatric disability at the level of specialized care when needed. This indicated that the employer appreciated that the person with a psychiatric disability would need to consult with specialists to maintain their health.

4.3 THEME 2: EMPLOYMENT AND DISABILITY FACTORS

Employment factors were the issues discussed in the context of the work seeker becoming employed and strategies to maintain employment during the partnership process. The participants' views were documented in terms of their attitude, expectations, requirements, concerns and strategies that need to be in place for the employment of a worker from the supported employment programme in their business.

4.3.1. The employer's opinion about the value of work opportunities for people with psychiatric disability

The participants had an understanding about the importance of creating work for people with psychiatric disability, therefore creating an alliance with the supported employment programme objectives and their capacity to create employment opportunities for people with psychiatric disability. This could be an ingredient that will enhance the partnership. The view

about the value of work was uncovered during a discussion with the owner of the Fisheries Place:

"...yes it (work) gives them meaning and it makes them (people with psychiatric disability) feel a err like they are socially accepted."

The manager of the Car Wash place resonated with creating a work opportunity by personally identifying with the person with a psychiatric disability's position when we discussed the potential social stigma that could come from other employers:

" Everybody should be given a chance for heaven's sake. Could be us".

After asking one of the managers at the Garden Place about how she would talk about the supported employment to other potential employers, she responded as follows:

" I would say look there is this programme around and there are a lot of workers out there who have been through rough times and are ready to rejoin the work group and are needing work. And they have the benefit of being able to enter the workplace with backup. And with support to help the employer and I think it's a brilliant idea!"

The need to find common ground (between a supported employment programme and a business) to form a partnership have thus been established. Each participant could relate to the idea and value of creating employment opportunities for people with psychiatric disability. This was influenced by the exposure of the programme through education about the supported employment programme and personal resonance with people with psychiatric disability seeking employment. The participants recognised the value of work for potential work seekers in the supported employment programme.

4.3.2. Exploring potential job vacancies in the company

All of the participants went through the stage of exploring job vacancies to be able to employ a person from the supported employment programme in their business. This stage involved contemplation of: 1) the type of jobs that could become available in the business, 2) the identification of jobs not suitable for a person with a psychiatric disability and 3) the possibility of creating a job specifically. When the researcher presented the supported employment programme to participants, she used many pictures of people with psychiatric disability working in other companies and emphasised the type of jobs that were needed.

The manager of the Car Wash Place considered two work options based on how the company could benefit from a new employee:

"Yes, if we came to that position, as I explained to you earlier, we do clean motor cars... But, there is an office... And I'm in the office. And I'm the only one in the office. And I'm not a genius on computers....You know what I mean."

This was based on exploring existing vacancies within the company. Some consideration was also given to the possibility of accommodating the new employee by creating a job. This presented a strategic solution to ensure that the partnership could be implemented:

"If you came to me and said to me "listen Charlie is not suitable for down there, but he is very good on office work, he can do this that and the other. We could consider that and I could create that position for him. Because in this particular point in time, and for the last six or seven months, there has been nobody (in the office) ".

For this employer, the decision would be based on his seeking advice from the job coach when choosing the most suitable job for the work seeker. It demonstrated that this employer could naturally respond to a job matching process if it was required.

During the process of considering the job availability in the company the manager also considered the best time to recruit a person from the supported employment programme. This was based on financial implications to the company:

“But I am restricted to that, you know hmm...winter is coming and in winter we normally have hmm hmm less staff.”

Implementing a partnership could be affected by certain times of the year when the business may not be doing well, which presented as a concern. The nature of the car wash industry affects staff recruitment during winter months when fewer cars are washed. It implies that for this industry, the chances of implementing a partnership will be more successful during summer months when more cars are washed.

The owner of the Fisheries Place’s consideration was based on a vacancy where he could benefit from the help of a new employee in the business. This presented a benefit in that the partnership would assist the employer to fill a vacancy that was required for his business:

“... but that person will be doing basics like packing the fridges and doing the manual labour, the girls can’t do that (referring to his existing staff,) ...”

At the same time, identifying the position had been influenced by his perception of the client’s inability to work a full day and his own financial capacity to afford to offer a work position only for a few hours a day:

"... I don't think they are capable of working a full day...and I can make use of employing someone for say two or three hours per day..."

Prior to deciding about the type of job that could become available, this employer also explored the work skills of people with psychiatric disability and what type of jobs they are not capable of doing. It highlighted a potential concern about a workers capacity:

"Okay, first of all, I wouldn't have them work directly with the customers. [Researcher]: Okay. [Participant]: Okay. For the simple reason that ... the people that I know that go to OT, that I personally know, in other words they wouldn't be able to work at the counter."

After some discussion about the work skills and abilities of workers from the supported employment programme, the employer added that concern about a worker's capacity is not a generalised concept to all people with psychiatric disabilities:

"But. I mean there are, I have met some of them that are, that are quite hmm, quite well spoken and everything else and they present themselves well. They can actually deal with customers. There are a couple of them".

For this employer, having a person with psychiatric disability working with customers in his shop was a concern, and he preferred to have the person work in a different job:

"But there is no reason why they shouldn't be able to work by cleaning as you said, like, cleaning the yard, peeling potatoes, even making the chips. Physically making the chips".

At this stage the employers' choice of the potential job that a person with psychiatric disability could do in his shop broadly met the criteria for people with psychiatric disability from the supported employment programme.

The manager at the Garden Place and the human resource manager both considered that the initiation of employing a worker from the supported employment programme would need to start at the most basic entry level jobs. From the perspective of the human resource manager, focus on the potential risk factors to the company influenced her reasoning:

"Because one of the main things that I think the corporate would need to consider is the risk factor.... but from a corporate point of view, you know, corporate have a company to run and, hmm, so you employ somebody and they are fine for say a year and then something happens and they end up back in hospital. If they are fulfilling an integral role, for example, they might need to be replaced and not for short periods. You know what I mean because that person who will replace them may need to learn the job from the start. What I'm also trying to say is that perhaps this would be easier in your more general types of jobs; you know what I'm saying. Hmm, like a general worker, somebody like that".

Although the choice of placing someone as a general worker fitted the requirements of the type of work the supported employment programme was looking for, the reasoning for the choice differed for the employer. The employer's decision was not based on consideration for the worker's skills as much as for minimizing the risk to the company in the context of potential failure after placing a worker. Despite this, an agreement of the type of job that could be available did suit the supported employment programme's needs.

The human resource manager considered the option of casual work availability as a possibility as well as creating a position for the potential new employee from the supported employment programme as possibilities:

“Although you are trying to sustain long term employment, but what we would often do, we would use people for periods of time, you know (Referring to seasonal work availability). Our employees generally stay with the company quite long, say ten years. SO we either have to create a position specifically for this person, or possibly when we get casuals in, consider recruiting at that period. From the Garden Centre point of view, they are fully staffed. Also staffs don’t leave very easily. So there isn’t vacancies available, hmm, but once again, if they need people to come in or even if we consider creating a position but it might just be a Saturdays position where on Saturdays or weekends they could assist people with pushing the trolleys to cars. It’s definitely something that can be looked at”.

A few possibilities for jobs that people with psychiatric disability could do emerged. This indicated a positive and flexible attitude from the participant who had to work in the confines of her business priorities such as minimizing risk factors.

Even though the manager of the Garden Place felt similar about offering low entry jobs, the reasoning for this differed from that of the human resource manager. This manager repeatedly maintained that for people with psychiatric disability repetitive jobs would be most suitable because of its low stress level and being less demanding on specialised skills related to knowledge about plants. For this employer, the perception of providing stressful jobs was a concern:

"Yah we're in the retail business but at the same time we've got to have the experts to deal with the public, because we have a huge amount of public and obviously our whole business revolves around customers. And, hmm, all our horticultural staff, are basically specialists. And from that side nobody can help you"..." But what I'm saying to you here, its not that one has to. When these mentally handicap or what ever challenge, it would be nice to have him in an environment where you can say okay Jake this is what we are going to do, we are going to be taking cuttings and put it into a thing and we are going to come out with a plant that will grow and he can see the result of it. You know the actual where you can see you are doing something. Where as oppose to here, this pressurised setting and it goes all the time, there is no real satisfaction".

While identifying a low entry job as an initial start, the retail store manager could also see value in job development if the workers proved their skills. It indicated a solution to upgrade low entry level jobs:

"I don't know whether some people who are challenged, let's say there are some less than others, but whether they are at a period of improving or whether they don't improve, or whatever. I should think that it does not matter. If you talk to someone like that...(unclear). I think it would be a marvellous thing if you could help someone, to find, to maybe create them to become self sufficient".

The same sentiment was found with the Fisheries Place owner who mentioned that if it worked out, he would teach the new employee to fry the fish and make doughnuts later. To some degree, the employer could see the process of job development was possible.

4.3.3. The employers' expectations of the worker requirements

The subject of worker requirements and recruitment process was not discussed with the corporate business because the human resource manager preferred not to talk about implementing strategies in detail until the partnership was discussed at a director level of management outside of the research process.

After learning about the core selection criteria for existing employees of the Car Wash Place, an understanding of the employer's expectations of the work seeker from the supported employment programme was established. The manager expressed the following work requirements as a need for his business:

"Yes. well obviously he'd need. He or she would need to be in good health because its hard work... and I would say of a reasonable age...'I don't mean that they have to pick up heavy boxes or bottles but its hard work...'Well most importantly ... honesty. Hmm and hmm, and friendship towards my staff and me...Very important they should be able to get on with other members of staff. "

Interestingly he required not only that people with psychiatric disability be able to physically cope with the work but also that they will have personal qualities that will enhance interactions with fellow workers. Therefore, the job coach must explore a broad variety of qualities of the work seeker with a psychiatric disability. The same process occurred with the Fisheries Place when the owner described the requirements of a worker:

"Especially in my type of business, you'd have like potato peeling or get the vegetables clean and packing the fridges.... they must be physically fit. They must be

able to pick up crates of cool drinks and things like that... I'm the only male. Obviously, a male whose got more strength".

In addition to the requirements, the employer also inquired about the work skills of people with psychiatric disability's capacity to work with machinery. This presented as a potential concern.

"And... what I'm actually scared of is – are they capable of working with machinery... the potato peeler and so on".

This was explored with the employer by describing the process of recruitment and selecting a person who will be capable of working with machinery. For this employer, worker requirements exceeded core skills of the job and extended to choosing a worker who lived in close proximity to his shop:

"If it's someone that either stays in the area, or very close to us... Well basically I would only make use of him only about two to three hours a day. So therefore he will have to stay in close proximity in Observatory. So he can just come down in the morning. Have a cup of coffee and start his job and do the potatoes and pack what needs to be packed and do a little bit of cleaning in the yard".

The employer's need to have the worker with a psychiatry disability live close by was substantiated by considering the impact of travelling costs to that worker in relation to the workers wages. The combination of saving cost on wages because of less travelling expenses was a benefit:

“... But, they place people too far away from their homes. And their payment just about covers their travelling allowance. They travel from home to work. So if someone had to go and work, and if they stayed in the area or close to work, [Researcher]: you actually mentioned that, and that will suit your company. Because what you are able to offer in terms of a wage won’t be taken up by transport. [Participant]: That’s correct. Yah. “.

4.3.4. The employers’ expectations of the recruitment process

Both the Car Wash Place and the Fisheries Place did not seem to follow formal guidelines and policies for recruiting staff, and they regarded the supported employment programme as just another source of recruitment, although it was also an opportunity for creating a partnership with the supported employment programme. For the manager of the Car Wash Place, the role of the job coach was considered vital in assisting the employer to choose a worker as well as meeting with the potential employee. This presented a benefit of the partnership:

“The decision would be based on your report and him or her....Well you’re the person that is working with that body, you know all about him or her. You are the most obvious person to choose. You know, to listen to”.

The same confidence was shown to the role of the job coach when the owner of the Fisheries Place spoke about his preferred choice of the recruitment process. For this employer, the role of the job coach was a benefit during the recruitment and selection process:

" Well you (referring to the job coach) should know exactly what he or she is able to do..." (pause)"But then, err, how long have you been working with them?
[Researcher]: ten years. [Participant]: Oh well then you should know them.
[Researcher]: So you would trust me to make that decision for you? [Participant]: Yes exactly. Cause its no use having a half an hour discussion with somebody, and then picking the person that's got the prettiest face! Where, you know his or her attributes.
Researcher: yes"

While considering what would best suit his needs during the selection process, the employer inquired about the credibility of the job coach in terms of experience of working with people with psychiatric disability. This influenced the employer to trust and consider the job coach as the appropriate person to assist with the selection of a new worker. It was based on the employer's opinion that the job coach will know the work seekers more in-depth than what the employer can learn from a half hour interview.

The manager of the Car Wash Place compared his usual process of recruitment to a recruitment process via the supported employment programme for his business. He described the recruitment process with the supported employment programme as advantageous:

"On the contrary. I would say this is a better idea because I'm going to act on your advice and also on your report of that person and also my meeting with them. So I would say this is far better than my doing an interview of a body that comes in and I know nothing about him.... Oh, absolutely. Most certainly, it's much more..."

4.3.5. Work accommodations

As a result of his experience of employing a person with psychiatric disability, the owner of the Fisheries Place demonstrated that he was able to modify work conditions to suit the worker. This demonstrated strategic solutions in dealing with the need for work accommodations in partnership:

“... and at least have their medication and to go to hospital and to go and get their maybe disability or trust or whatever it is. That you can work around that. Like this week the guy, he had to go to hospital yesterday, and he had to go and get his money today, so we can work around that because it’s close by. If he wants to pop out and go and make his meal for the evening or whatever, that’s alright”.

For this employer, he was able to understand and implement the necessary work accommodations for the employee with a disability. The manager of the Car Wash Place could understand the importance of instituting a system that will offer help to the people with psychiatric disability in the workplace:

” Yes, yes.” ...“I think the important thing about this project. I think that the help that this person is getting where he is or wherever they are.... And the follow up that you would give. You or another body would give. I think that’s vitally important. Because you are obviously going to keep in touch either with me or with the other person as to how things are going and that type of thing”.

Although we did not discuss particular work accommodations, the manager showed an openness to accommodate the worker to ensure that the worker’s health needs are met. A similar finding came from one of the managers of the Garden Place shop:

“...If it’s a prearranged thing, and it can be worked into the timetable, it should be fine. But, if its sort of a spontaneous thing where they don’t come to work because they had to go to the doctor or whatever, that never goes down well because you know, once you’ve built up a relationship with the person, you start then hindering on them being here at a particular time and if you can plan your life and say okay I’m not going to be here tomorrow afternoon, then that’s fine. You know, we are a seven day a week business and hmm, everybody is off at some time or the other”.

The manager was open to allowing the worker some time off and she elaborated about the conditions of work accommodations in that some planning will need to occur.

In summary, the concept of work accommodations for people with psychiatric disability in the workplace was seen as possible for employers to achieve.

4.4. THEME 3: SOCIAL FACTORS

Social factors were categorised into three categories viz. the social group, social values and social attitude. All of these are issues that affect the interpersonal relationships between people with psychiatric disability entering into a workplace and the rest of the staff working there.

4.4.1. Social Group Factors

Social group factors refer to the impact of a new worker with a psychiatric disability entering into a workgroup that has existing bonds and a work ethic that contributes to productivity in

the workplace. The participants were concerned about the impact on other staff when a worker with psychiatric disability enters into employment. This was based on concern that existing staff morale might be disrupted because of their potential inability to accept or handle the new worker from the supported employment programme.

4.4.1.1. Confidentiality and sharing employee information with other employees

Sharing information about the new employee entering into employment at a company became an obvious need for employers, which potentially could breach the right to confidentiality about the people with psychiatric disability in the workplace. Confidentiality of the potential new worker was only discussed with the Car Wash Place close to the stage of the trial placement that occurred. At the stage of talking about having a work interview with a work seeker from the supported employment programme for a job trial placement, the manager wanted to include his supervisor because it is the norm of practice in the company:

" ...but whatever happens, I'd involve V (the supervisor) in everything, virtually everything that I do. And if I can't involve him, I'd tell him about it afterwards so he knows exactly what is happening ".

Subsequently, the supervisor sat in on the interview. He had been briefed as follows:

"And in fact I had explained to him what you were here for and I said..." oh , yes, I said do you remember the lady and the employee".

This demonstrates that confidentiality about the person's illness was maintained and emphasis was placed on the job coach bringing a new employee and not a person with a psychiatric disability into the company:

“I would say that you are like the employment broker, trying to find a position for your member”.

During the first day of a trial placement, the supervisor noticed that the new employee from the supported employment programme seemed “different”. He made inquiries about this to his manager who then called me to give advice on the situation. After gaining permission from the employee to share some basic information about himself, a meeting was held with both the supervisor and manager to explain only general information about psychiatric illness. The information sharing meeting assisted the supervisor to be more understanding of the process and therefore more insightful to working with the new employee who seemed “different”. In this example, a balance between confidentiality and sharing knowledge about the person's disability had been successful in gaining co operation from other employees.

The manager of the Garden Place shared her experience of working with a person with a disability and trying to maintain confidentiality:

“Yah, when B came in he didn’t want anybody to know what is wrong with him, and it was hard”.

It seemed that an arrangement about sharing some information about the person with a psychiatric disability became important to gain co operation from other employees such as the manager's supervisor. This is an issue that should be explored closely with the work seekers of the supported employment programme as it could be to their advantage in sustaining good interpersonal relationships with some of the staff who will offer them support and guidance on the job.

4.4.1.2. Discomfort to other staff

The manager of the Fisheries Place voiced his concern about working with the other staff and the importance of not having to change the work environment too much for the new worker:

"...if they can work with other staff, because you know, we aren't all robots. Just say, one of the staff could say something that could trigger him or her off, I'm not meaning it, its you were saying. I wouldn't be able to change my staff now to adapt to that person. That person should adapt to us as much as possible".

Besides showing concern about his staff adapting to working with a person with psychiatric disability, this employer also expressed the fear that something in the workplace could precipitate undesirable behaviour, and he required some reassurance that people with psychiatric disability could also adapt to their circumstances.

There seemed to be a need for the employer (and his existing employees) to know how to handle and effectively communicate with people with psychiatric disability. There seemed to be a perception that people with psychiatric disability may be prone to "losing control" because of their psychiatric illness, especially in conflict situations. The employer needed an assurance that few changes would be experienced from the existing staff.

This employer highlighted the need to provide basic knowledge and advice about the new worker prior to the placement process, especially about communication between the new worker, the employer and the other staff, and so highlighted the need to discuss support and various work accommodations that ought to be considered for all role players.

A similar concern was found when the Garden Place manager spoke about the perceived response from other employees if a new worker was recruited from the supported employment programme:

“The problem with having people like this is that the existing labourers may see them usurping their positions”.

This highlighted that employers will need to feel reassured that there will be minimal discomfort to their existing staff when entering into a partnership. It became evident that the partnership would have an influence on existing employees who will need some kind of explanation to reassure them whilst maintaining confidentiality about the people with psychiatric disability is maintained. A strategy to assist existing employees to understand the basic concepts of the partnership prior to the work placement stage was needed.

4.4.1.3. Social Stigma

Most of the participants were concerned that other employers would stigmatise people with psychiatric disability. On further inquiry about other potential barriers that the Car Wash Place manager anticipated from other employers, he responded by identifying attitudinal barriers:

“ I think, the only thing I can think of from that point of view, which I don’t think. It’s like thinking, of being racialistic.... You know. “I don’t want to work with that person cause they black or I don’t want to work with a black person. Do you know what I mean, I think this is similar.” “Psychologically affected” really I don’t think I would like to work with that person. That could be the stumbling block from other businesses. You know, they won’t look at it from a human point of view. You know what I mean.

It's just "oh no, I couldn't have" they won't even try. You know what I mean. And I think that's wrong, I really do".

The owner of the Fisheries Place shared a similar opinion about other potential employers' attitudes. I asked the employer how he would talk about the concept of the supported employment programme to other employers. He shared that he would recommend the programme to other employers, but identified lack of awareness and stigma against people with psychiatric disability as potential barriers:

"Yes, I would definitely recommend you. Because I feel that we also, everyone, not only firms and everyone else, everyone in society should know about them (people with psychiatric disability) and don't say oh there goes a mad thing! You know something like that. They should all know, and what hasn't been done, enough I feel is the normal people to be made aware, of what is actually wrong with them (people with psychiatric disability)".

The employer highlighted that when establishing a partnership the broader social stigma against people with psychiatric disability will also need to be addressed. It can also be noted that the employer had identified that in the broad community social stigma was always a potential barrier to consider when establishing partnerships with companies to promote employment of people with psychiatric disability.

4.4.2. Social Value System

All participants indicated a social interest in being able to assist people with psychiatric disability through job creation. It became evident that this social interest occurred on a personal level, where participants as individuals were willing to make a personal contribution

to mobilise the business to employ a person with a psychiatric disability from the supported employment programme.

4.4.2.1. "Doing good"

The idea of "doing good" by assisting a people with psychiatric disability via the partnership was observed from the response of the car wash manager:

"I'm not speaking as a business person, I'm speaking as a human being (laughing)... and I would very much like to be able to help in some way from this point of view. The staff I have here and, hmm, I have worked with them for approximately (pause) 14 months. And some I have got on very well with and they with me. Others have abandoned us (laughing) and have left us. Sometimes under a cloud which is very sad. However, the remainder that are here are a very loyal trusting amount of people. I have got to know them well and they have got to know me well so much so that I'm very happy to say that they trust as they would trust their father and I'm probably too old to be their father....but you know what I mean...so from that point of view I'm very happy about that. And I would like in some way to be able to do this. I do what I can for the existing staff. You know what I mean. I mean where I can help , I help, where I can give, I give. Hmm, if it cant be of monetary value, it will certainly be of advice. You know what I mean".

The manager displayed an inherent interest because he seemed to enjoy helping people where he can. The concept of the supported employment programme resonated with him on a personal level and he could visualise his capacity to help others whom he perceived could benefit from his help.

Similarly, the manager of the Garden Place expressed his view of the purpose of a partnership from a social perspective:

"I think it's to establish if some people can or want to be in this industry and if it takes off and starts working, they might get more and more interested. I don't know whether some people who are challenged, lets say there are some less than others, but whether they are at a period of improving or whether they don't improve, or whatever. I should think that it does not matter. If you talk to someone like that... (unclear). I think it would be a marvellous thing if you could help someone, to find, to maybe create them to become self sufficient".

The owner of the Fisheries Place spoke about engendering a sense of social responsibility. Accordingly his suggestion of having workers that work in close proximity to their place of residence suggested that assisting people with psychiatric disabilities was associated with helping their community:

"For those people who own businesses. And you must also tell them, they are part of the community, Valkenberg was here before they were here. And they have to live by it. They have to, they can't go and have an armed guard go by and chasing people off the street because they are little bit silly or whatever. They have to accept it. They (businesses) moved into Observatory as such. [Researcher]: That's true. Its part of their community responsibility. [Participant]: Yah, it's the community's responsibility".

4.4.3. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

The human resource manager of the Garden Place emphasised that the partnership is an opportunity for a company to proactively participate in social responsibility:

"Now I mean obviously to be part of a programme like this, would be a good social responsibility, it would be a good social investment that the company makes".

The supported employment programme was seen as an opportunity to mobilise a business's social responsibility as it meets the requirements of corporate social responsibility in terms of advocating for a particular social cause (such as job creation for people with psychiatric disability) via the company's investment in a social programme.

4.5. THEME 4: COST FACTORS

4.5.1. Earning a disability grant and working

The topic of cost and expenses was discussed at different stages of inquiry. All three businesses made inquiries about paying wages to a disability grant recipient. It presented a potential concern:

"... the only thing that concerns me is what you've just said, is a disability grant. I would be paying him a salary, how does that affect his disability grant? But I mean as far as I'm concerned, it's perfectly alright".

The owner of the Fisheries Place had a similar query of concern:

“Because what I’m scared of is the guys going to earn so much, that err he won’t get his disability.”

The human resource manager of the Garden Place had a similar query:

“So in other words you cannot pay people too much more because they are on a disability grant”.

The need became evident for a clear understanding about legislation regarding payment of wages in combination with earning a disability grant. This information was shared with all three employers who became aware of the appropriate guidelines for them to consider. Thus there is a need for the job coach to demonstrate to employers that it is possible to pay a wage to a person with psychiatric disability while they are earning a disability grant.

4.5.2. Free recruitment

The human resource manager wanted to know what the job coach and recruitment from the supported employment would cost the company:

“And does the company pay, you know because it sounds like, in essence, it’s almost like a bit of a recruitment agency”.

She seemed to view the supported employment programme in the same light as a commercial recruitment company. It became evident that, offering the service at no cost to this employer was a definite advantage in comparison to recruiting from agencies.

4.5.3. Cost Saving

The manager of the Car Wash Place commented on his initial response when he met the researcher for the first time. It was interesting to note that once he realised the researcher was not asking for money, he felt more at ease to listen:

“You’re not selling, well you are selling something, but we are not paying for it, do you know what I mean. So, therefore we can listen: But, but it is a good thing because you are not selling anything, Well you are but it’s not going to cost anything. I’m talking about the customer obviously or the prospective client... you know what I mean. So I would say from that that point of view, it’s good, I think”.

It seems that for this manager, not having to donate or pay money to the supported employment programme was appealing and may have contributed to engage his interest to listen and consider the partnership. Conversely, had the supported employment programme requested a fee for recruitment, it may have affected the business’s capacity to engage in a partnership.

4.5.4. Job shaping and cost saving strategy to the employer

It became apparent that although the manager of the Fisheries Place was keen to engage in the partnership, he was affected by the financial implications. By elaborating on his business needs, the employer started to share other factors that would best suit his business needs when recruiting a new worker. A factor related to the wages that the employer could offer was explored, starting with identifying his limitations of what he could offer as shown in the following statement by the employer:

“Well, I shouldn’t say this but I wouldn’t be able to pay much....”

In summary, cost factors held implications for these employers if they wanted to establish partnerships. Not having to spend money for recruitment services from the job coach was an advantage for them. Establishing clarity about paying wages to a person earning a disability grant was a concern and requiring assurance to comply with legislation in this matter was identified.

4.6. THEME 5: MARKETING FACTORS

4.6.1. Marketing techniques and approaches

4.6.1.1. The job coach visiting employers personally

The researcher asked the owner of the Fisheries Place about some advice of how a job coach could be effective when marketing the supported employment programme amongst other employers:

“Besides going to each person yourself, Having an open day at OT. I wouldn’t be able to make it because I’m a one man show but then again I think what would be 100 % better, is you would have to go out to every business.”

The employer felt that the job coach should go and meet with each employer individually even though he also suggested that an open day would be a good idea. He then expanded on how a business person does not have time to take off and visit the supported employment programme via an open day:

**“Yah. Because everyone, I’m only speaking about the businesses in this area.
[Researcher]: okay. [Participant]: Because, everyone hasn’t got a set time, that you**

can go and see them. That is why its better for you to do one, err, go see everyone on his own. You won't be able to call like a meeting or something like that. For instance, Divas opens at x time and I open this time, you know we all can't be at one place at one time. And that is about the best possible way. To go and see them personally."

For this participant, while considering his business responsibilities and limited time, he felt that the job coach should go and visit every employer on an individual level when trying to establish partnerships between their business and the supported employment programme.

The employer of the Car Wash Place gave a similar response:

"You going to see them. (laughter). [Researcher]: really, explaining? [Participant]: And explain what you're coming for and then sit down as you do or as you did with me, for half an hour tell them. Let them make a decision. He further emphasised that meeting with employers would depend on the job coach's approach: "... And it also depends on your approach to that person. And I mean YOUR approach".

For this employer, the interpersonal contact established with the job coach was a positive influence. The employer felt that it was useful to visualise how a similar partnership could be established in his business:

"I'm pleased to hear about the Pizza guy. [Researcher]: yes. It's just down the road from you. [Participant]: you know what I mean. It's not only that, it's, it's in the restaurant business... Well, you're using a body on in the kitchen of a business. (Participant picked up the supported employment pamphlet at this stage and looked at it). Which I think is vitally important. You know what I mean. And by the same token, that person obviously was suitable for that kitchen. He may not be suitable for

the car wash. But then again, you're going to find somebody for the car wash. Do you understand what I mean? And so I think from that point of view, it's great. I think this is a very good advert (pointing to the supported employment brochure). [Researcher]: yah. To show something, a work in progress. [Participant]: yes yes, very much so".

Displaying real examples of successful placements in other businesses added credibility to the supported employment programme and the use of a brochure to demonstrate this was a helpful marketing tool.

4.6.1.2. Follow up visits to employers

It became evident that follow up visits, after individual meetings with the employer are crucial to take the process of developing a partnership further. This was learnt after the following interaction with the owner of the Fisheries Place. He decided to recruit a person with psychiatric disability to work in his shop on his own because the supported employment programme did not respond quickly enough:

"Well time is a factor. Try and be as close as possible back to that person. [Researcher]: And that would have basically done the trick. [Participant]: yes. I was interested in someone..."

Not following up with employers in a specified time, may cause the partnership to be lost.

4.6.1.3. Doing a presentation about the supported employment programme to employers

The researcher asked the Garden Place manager about the supported employment Power point presentation and inquired if she had any advice on presenting the supported employment programme to the human resource manager and she responded as follows:

"...I think you, I think you sort of gone through it from the beginning this is what I'm doing this is how I do it and why I do it, its pretty straight forward".

For this manager, the presentation was effective. The researcher inquired the participant would tell other employers about the supported employment programme in her own words:

"I would say: Look there is this programme around and there are a lot of workers out there who have been through rough times and are ready to rejoin the work group and are needing work. And they have the benefit of being able to enter the workplace with backup. And with support to help the employer and I think it's a brilliant idea!

She too felt that the supported employment Power point presentation gave a visual idea of the programme and the workers:

"Yah, I mean it's always helpful to see what it is you do. And the faces behind the thing. I mean you can see that they don't have five arms or something like that! (laughing)".

The employer's response confirmed that visual images added to understanding the worker image and what they are capable of.

The owner of the Fisheries Place compared the power point presentation to the supported employment pamphlet that were both used during the interviews and his response was as follows:

"Yah well, I'm the type of person that pamphlets, it is useful, but that(pointing to the picture presentation of supported employment programme) on the laptop, with the photos on and everything else, is better for me. I'm a,I must see something before I can you know.... I think this is better, personally I think its better. So, if you have a presentation again, it will be, I think it's advisable to do it on the laptop... Yah. Because, now err, I can compare that guy working in the restaurant to my own shop.

He preferred the power point presentation because it gave him a visual idea of the partnership which also triggered a picture of a potential partnership with his shop.

4.6.1.4. Pamphlets/letters/phone calls

Since the conversation was on marketing, the manager of the Car Wash Place spoke about his experience of being approached by other companies:

"You know, so many people send out brochures or flyers or whatever. And then nobody follows it up! (giggle). [Researcher]: Is it? D: nobody follows it up. Now if you don't follow it up!? (Looking as though he made his point!) [Participant]: But now, the situation is as I see it: this (holding a pamphlet) has been sent to me and if I didn't phone, what would they have done? Would they phone me back or not? You know, and I believe that they should. [Researcher]: So, keeping in touch...[Participant]: Yes, I mean, look you can't become a nuisance, but you could phone and say did you get

our letter are you interested, may I come and talk to you or whatever the case may be. Otherwise, you are not going to get anywhere. I believe”.

The employer advised that sending a letter or pamphlets should be followed up with a phone call or some type of contact with employers because it's not a priority for him:

” You know what I mean... So it's out of my mind as well. You know. I don't know what I can do or can't do but I would help if people showed some interest. But, you should make the move in my opinion. I was so happy when you did phone”.

Besides ensuring that there is follow up with the employer, the timing of the follow up will make a difference. Allowing too much time to lapse before contacting the employer may again result in a loss of interest captured by the first point of contact made with the employer, which could lead to losing a potential partnership.

4.6.1.5. Marketing approach at a Director level

For the corporate company marketing the supported employment at a level of director was considered a serious step in the process of decision making and included more than the supported employment presentation:

” I would prefer to look at the research side and the implementation side separately because as I explained in our company if we are going to implement it we need to take it seriously and we need to get all the information and go and present it to the directors. It would most likely be that you need to put a proposal forward, preferably on paper so they would know what's it about and then possibly also come and do the power point presentation to explain what's its about and then privately we will look at

the pro's and cons for the company, see if we can afford it, whether its viable to bring in etc. etc. and then a decision will be made and that decision will be made at director level. It's definitely something that can be looked at".

Marketing the supported employment programme at this level would need to include a written proposal with additional information such as the potential risks and other consequences. On further inquiry about what other information would be needed the human resource office/manager responded as follows:

" I think if you just explain the programme, like you have done with me now, you put across exactly what its about and success stories and why its important and especially the advantages to the company that's the most important part of the proposal.[Researcher]: Such as ? [Participant]: The employment equity and the BEE. Yah. So you might have to do a bit of research to show how employing people with disabilities are advantageous to BEE and EE. You don't have to understand it completely but you need to understand it in order to motivate it. Because the minute you can sell a benefit, the more people buy into it. So, I would say that if you do the proposal and you are trying to get corporates involved in an exercise like this, you need to bring up those specific factors. And also the risk factors. The risk to other employees, because that's important. I mean if the person's psychiatric disability causes them to become violent when they fall ill, that is going to be a problem. So definitely the risks part of it and then hmm, sell it from the point of view of social responsibility as well. Most companies are involved in social responsibility and some will say to you sorry we are involved in other projects, other companies are involved in companies on a smaller scale and can get involved with something like this, you know just to improve their... because it's a good initiative".

4.6.2. Advertising/ Networking strategies

4.6.2.1. Advertising & Publicity

The Car Wash Place manager inquired about advertising:

“.. Another thought that struck me.. ...Is what advertising have you done, if any”.

This inquiry was based on his personal experience of not knowing about the supported employment programme prior to the interviews:

” This has never. I have never heard of this before. Never...in all my years of business (laughter). [Researcher]: Really? [Participant]: Yes, I’ve never heard of this business”.

The participant’s lack of awareness of the supported employment programme suggested one reason why companies are not considering supported employment. It highlighted the need to promote an awareness of supported employment programme amongst employers. I explored reasons why an average business owner or person may not spontaneously think about establishing a partnership with a supported employment programme. The employer’s response reinforced the need for publicity of the supported employment programme:

”But the point is that unless somebody like you can spread the word, I don’t think there is much or some publicity of some kind”.

It emerged that marketing and advertising was an important component of the job coach role. Marketing the supported employment programme via the media was suggested:

"I was thinking more like getting in touch with say Radio FM or something like that and saying something. You know and saying, can't they just mention something, even Noelene. You know Noelene on T.V.?"

This suggestion opened another avenue for marketing the supported employment programme that could be explored by job coaches in the future.

4.6.2.2. Community networking

The importance of networking with the local business community was emphasised by the employer, who suggested expanding the networks by establishing partnerships with businesses that already have links with Valkenberg Hospital and are in the Observatory area. He recommended that this networking could also be with the voluntary organisation called Friends of Valkenberg:

"And or try and find out from Valkenberg whoever those people are. Find out what firms donate stuff and try and work in that way, Yah, their network, try and get in. Because they are helping Valkenberg by giving say for instance toilet paper, or soap, or what ever. And try and get in via that way, If I had a company making soap, and Pat knew you from friends, I would donate there, I would surely also try and help them by work, if there was work".

He also suggested making contact with the Observatory Residency Council, which he illustrated by describing a successful job creation that had occurred via the council:

"Ben, a big African guy. Now he washes cars, once a week he cleans our parking area in Observatory here, which is controlled by the Observatory people, he's got a daily

job there, cleaning up. And he cleans the block of flats at the back here. He's almost full time employed. And he is earning as a casual labourer 80 to R100 a day. [Researcher]: And how does he get paid? V: By the Observatory Residency Association. They pay for cleaning the parking area. [Researcher]: Do you think they could. [Participant]: Yes, you should get hold of them. Definitely. They are called the OTA... yes give me your number. I know the one particular woman, and she'll know to help you".

Subsequent to the interview, a woman telephoned the researcher and a plan was initiated to print an article about the supported employment programme in the local area newspaper.

The employer viewed the concept of establishing partnerships as a community responsibility amongst businesses that are in close proximity to the supported employment programme. His observations of these businesses were that people with psychiatric disability who wander around in the area are a nuisance. Another dimension of networking was discovered by the employer, when he suggested that the supported employment programme establish relationships with various organisations that have direct and indirect links with other businesses. One of the participants referred to community contacts he made in the local parish:"

"And hmm, you know another thing, that might be, might be helpful as well. I belong to, I'm a catholic and I belong to this Parish in Observatory. He is someone that maybe you can chat to, that maybe. I know they also have a counsellor, at the Parish, a lady counsellor who helps discuss problems with anybody or things like that. You know, the publicity that you could get, you know there may be others just sitting there waiting for somebody like you to come along and say listen have heard of this. I've never heard of anything like it".

4.6.3. The employer's role in marketing

4.6.3.1. Building up employer networks

Two of the participant employers suggested that they could personally get involved in making introductions to other businesses. One employer recommended that he would feel confident to talk about the partnership once he had gone through the process of establishing a partnership. Two of the participant employers encouraged me as a job coach to go and meet other employers. Another employer suggested that the supported employment programme should consider media marketing.

In discussing marketing issues, the manager of the Car Wash Place shared his opinion about how he would be able to approach other businesses about the supported employment programme. He considered going through the experience of the partnership as the best way to convince other employers:

"I would tell them exactly what we have been discussing in my opinion. I think it's great. I really do. [Researcher]: What would you say to someone like that in terms of why it would be advantageous to their business? [Participant]: Well. (Long pause). I wouldn't look at that point of view. I would tell them of my experience, which I've had nothing except with you. I would tell them of my experiences, and how it has worked for me, and why I'm doing it. And expect them or ask them to do to give it a try. I wouldn't hesitate in that".

It became evident that this employer could be involved in marketing the supported employment programme with other companies, especially if his experiences were positive. The conversation of marketing triggered a personal interest for the employer to convey

suggestions of other strategies that might be used. These included individual networking with other companies that he could refer to the job coach. On referral to other companies he made the following suggestion of his network contacts:

“I’m pleased to hear about the Pizza guy. It’s in the restaurant business, and I’ve mentioned to you those people up the road there, and they’ve opened another shop, you know and they are decent people. I think I think they could be interested but I wouldn’t know. I would talk to them if it became necessary. “.

It became evident that the participant was willing to personally advertise the supported employment programme using his personal contacts and networks. It illustrated that marketing the supported employment programme could happen via employer contacts and community networks too. Another option to define the job coach role of marketing was uncovered.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS OBTAINED FROM SECOND LEVEL ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The second phase of analysis presents interpretations of the participant employers' perceptions to explicate their process of evaluating the viability of a partnership. It emerged that the job coach role was according to the participant employers' process of evaluating the viability of a partnership. This led to identifying that the job coach influenced an employer's level of receptivity to form partnerships.

5.1. EMPLOYERS ENTERED A PROCESS OF EVALUATING THE VIABILITY OF A PARTNERSHIP

Closer inspection of employer perceptions about the formation of partnerships showed that employers were in fact going through a *process of evaluating* how viable a partnership would be for their particular business. Their process of decision making to form a partnership was influenced by their perceptions, namely:

- Identifying **risks or concerns** that could affect their business.
- Identifying **benefits** that a partnership would bring to their business
- Predicting **changes and establishing needs** that will be required of their business should a partnership be formed.

5.2. THE JOB COACH ROLE AS SHAPED BY PARTICIPANTS' EVALUATION OF THE VIABILITY OF A PARTNERSHIP

Looking across the three case studies, the findings showed that employers were willing to consider the formation of a partnership despite their preconceptions of concerns, risks and fears.

The job coach's role was being shaped by the employers' process of decision making to form a partnership. It became apparent that the job coach had to understand the employers' underlying perceptions of benefits, risks and concerns in order to identify their needs, preferences and requirements for a partnership to develop.

Table 2 illustrates how the job coach's role was shaped to influence employers' level of receptivity to develop partnerships. The first column highlights factors that were discussed between the researcher and the participants. The second column provides interpretations of the underlying meaning of participant employers' perceptions. The third column highlights how the job coach's role was shaped in response to emerging business needs.

Table 2: Discussion factors that affected an employer's level of receptivity which shaped the job coach role

Factors	Interpretations of employers' perceptions	The Job Coach's response
Job vacancy: Worker skills	<p>Some participant employers had doubts about the person with psychiatric disability's work skills. One employer could imagine a worker from the supported employment programme in his business.</p>	<p>As a job coach, I realised that some employers need help to be able to see the work capacity of people with psychiatric disability when they consider forming a partnership.</p>
Availability of a job a job placement in the business	<p>Some participant employers preferred starting with entry level jobs as it was less risky. Others had limited choice, which was suitable to the level.</p>	<p>The employer and job coach were in agreement of entry level jobs.</p> <p>It terms of risk:</p> <p>The job coach needed to show the employer that a situation can be handled if something goes wrong but at the save time reassure the employer that the workers are ready for employment.</p>

Factors	Interpretations of employers' perceptions	The job coach's response
Dealing with relapse at work	All participant employers needed reassurance that relapse issues can be adequately dealt with in a partnership. If they did not feel satisfied about this, they would be hesitant about the partnership. Employers wanted to avoid bad publicity or to dismiss anyone on incapacity.	I realised that I could not reassure the employer 100% that a worker will not relapse, but I could try to illustrate to the employer that the relapse situation can be managed with systems of support. I also thought that using examples of relapse situations effectively dealt with in other businesses may be of help to reassure the employers.
Dealing with accidents at work	Two employers considered the risks of accidents happening due to the person with a psychiatric disability.	I realised that I needed to show the employer that if we did the job matching analysis, we could prevent situations like accidents. Also that some of the workers with a psychiatric disability can work with machinery and perhaps I should illustrate this to the employer using real scenarios in other businesses.
Workplace accommodations: time off; hours adjusted; job coach visit	All participant employers agreed to workplace accommodations which seemed reasonable and possible to arrange from the business side, as long as they would be informed in advance to arrange things.	I realised that the nature of work accommodations that were required specifically for people with psychiatric disability was reasonable for the employer, which required little convincing.
Opinion to form a partnership	To some degree, all employers valued that the partnership could make a difference to the life of a person with a psychiatric disability which had made them feel receptive about the partnership.	I realised that the employer was willing to enter into a partnership because they could identify the value of such a partnership as related to the life of a person with a psychiatric disability. It meant that talking about the value of work was useful.

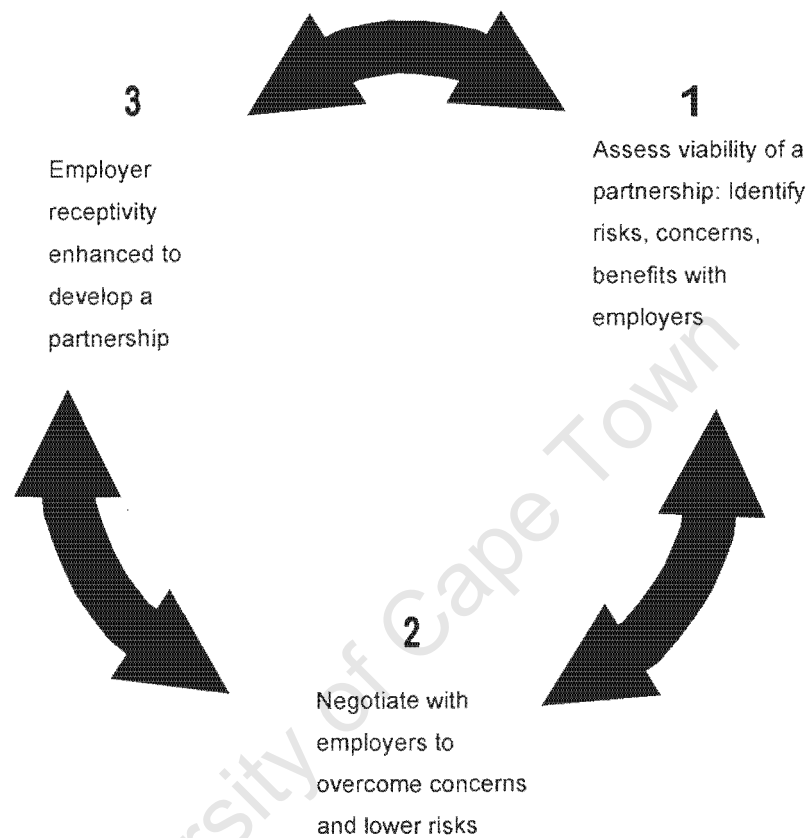
Factors	Interpretations of employers' perceptions	The job coach's response
Trial placements	All the participant employers felt that a trial period would be a test to see if a partnership can work in their business.	I realised that the partnership formation will be graded and that the person with a psychiatric disability should also realise that trial placements is part of getting a job. I also realised that this was going to be a crucial time for the employer to make a decision about forming a partnership.

5.3. INFLUENCING AN EMPLOYER'S RECEPTIVITY TO FORM A PARTNERSHIP

It seemed that when the job coach could understand employers' needs, it became more obvious how to best negotiate certain issues that would enhance receptivity to form partnerships. It was found that discussions with the job coach had influenced employers to realise that their perceived risks, concerns and fears could be managed during the process of forming partnerships. On reflection, the job coach's role had been to try and influence employers' process of decision making to convince them to form partnerships with the supported employment programme. Furthermore, the job coach educated the employers about supported employment which allowed for them to understand the value and benefits of a partnership. To some extent, the job coach had to build an employers' level of receptivity to improve their confidence to form a partnership, despite their perceived risks and concerns. It can therefore be accepted that the job coach influenced employers' receptivity to form a partnership with the supported employment programme. This cycle of building an employer's level of receptivity to develop a partnership is illustrated in figure 3. This finding emphasises

importance for a job coach to have negotiating skills when meeting with employers and educating them about supported employment partnerships.

Figure 3: Cycle of building employers receptivity to develop a partnership



CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section will discuss implication for findings on the role of the job coach to form supported employment partnerships with businesses. The first section of the discussion will identify how the formation of partnerships can be developed by explicating the stages of development that a partnership will go through. The centrality of the relationship between the job coach and the employer is recognised. The second part of the discussion will explore the relationship between employer and the job coach to illustrate strategies and approaches that could enhance the formation of supported employment partnerships with businesses.

6.1. STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT THAT A PARTNERSHIP WILL GO THROUGH

The findings of this study have shown that the formation of partnerships is a process that develops over time. Figure 4 explicates the stages of developing such a partnership. It is being proposed that each stage is a continuous process leading up to the formation and development of a partnership. The five stages are to:

Stage 1: Establishing relationships with employers so that the partnership can be explored as an option for their business.

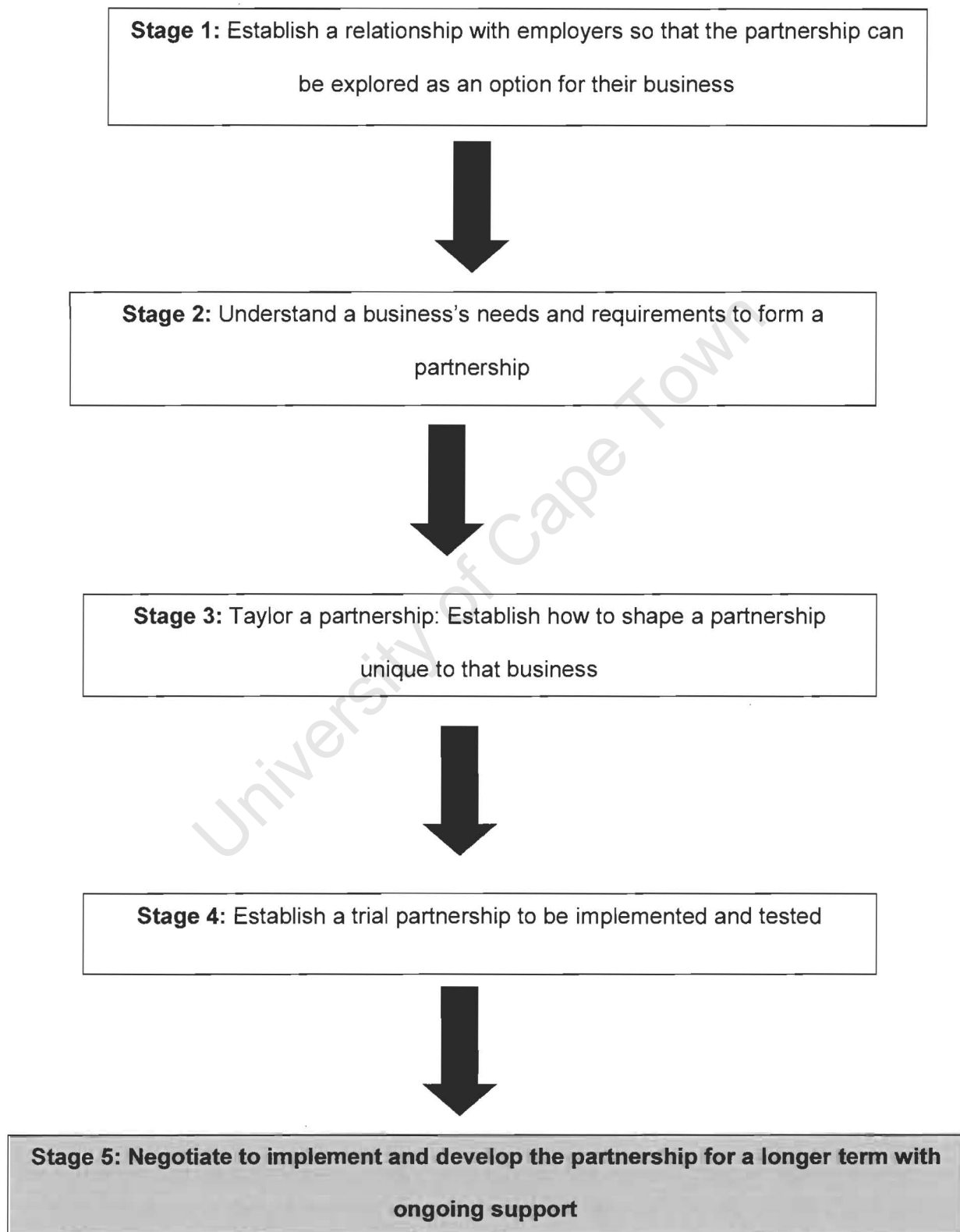
Stage 2: To Establish the business needs and requirements of employers to form partnerships.

Stage 3: To Tailor a partnership to meet unique aspects of a business combined with meeting the needs of the person with a psychiatric disability.

Stage 4: To Implement a trial partnership.

Stage 5: To Develop the partnership to become sustainable over time.

Figure 4: The stages in the process of developing a partnership:



6.2. THE PROCESS OF ESTABLISHING RELATIONSHIPS WITH EMPLOYERS

The process of establishing relationships with employers formed the foundation stage of developing supported employment partnerships with businesses. It has implications for the role of the job coach in terms of:

- Identifying strategies that can initiate relationships with new employers.
- Identifying marketing strategies that can enhance the willingness of employers to be interested in forming partnerships.
- Understanding the value of establishing good interpersonal dialogue with employers.

6.2.1. IDENTIFYING STRATEGIES THAT CAN INITIATE RELATIONSHIPS WITH NEW EMPLOYERS

6.2.1.1. Job coaches should take steps to initiate relationships with employers

Strategies to get the employer and the job coach to come together could be initiated via the employer or via the job coach. The fact that the employers are not contacting job coaches does not mean that they are not interested in forming partnerships. Participants in this study did not know anything about the supported employment programme or its partnership potential; however, when they were approached by the job coach, they became interested. This implies that job coaches must accept the risk to take steps to initiate relationships with employers in order to initiate the development of partnerships. Doing so will require of the job coach to allocate dedicated time for visits to new employers.

6.2.1.2. Initiate and develop a relationship with decision makers in the business

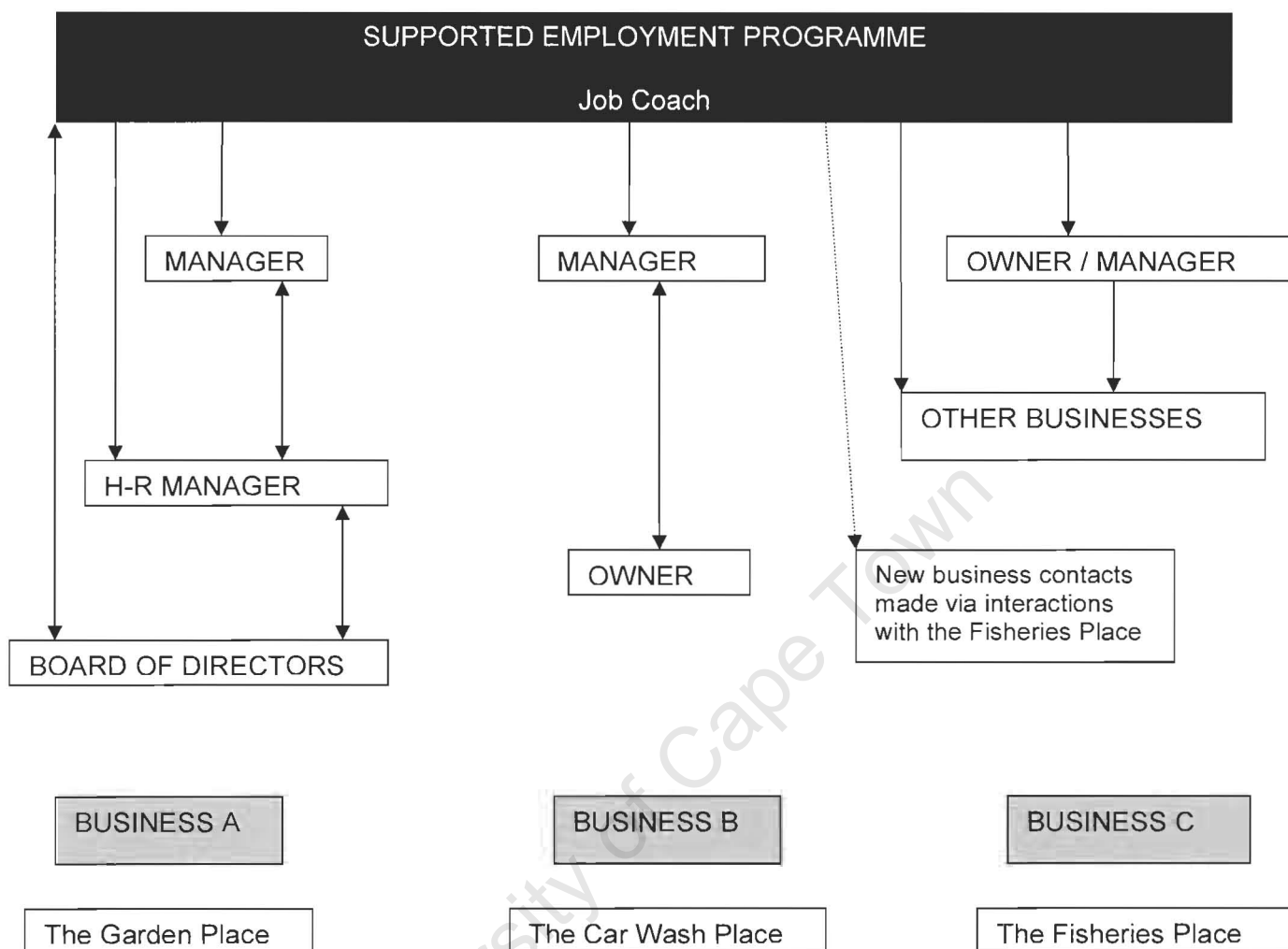
Analysis of the unique staffing structure of each business determined who the job coach had to negotiate with. This study confirmed findings by Brooke & Green (2001) who found that time spent analysing the corporate structure of a company will prove to be a wise investment when attempting to determine who has the decision making authority.

It took a longer time to establish a relationship with the larger corporate company because there were three structured levels of consultation that needed to occur. This same company also seemed to need a longer time to schedule an appointment with the job coach. In contrast, initiating a relationship with the participant employers in the two smaller companies occurred immediately because they had the time and because they were the right people to be talking to i.e. they were the only decision makers in the business.

It is therefore recommended that job coaches should not feel discouraged if some employers need more time than others, as their timing for a discussion with a job coach will be affected by business priorities. Job coaches are encouraged to persevere until they are able to get a meeting with the right decision maker of the company.

The job coach would need to identify who in the business will have the authority to form a partnership. It is therefore recommended that the job coach would need to become familiar with the businesses' management structures to ensure that they he/she is talking to the right person or people in the business to form a partnership with that particular business. This is an important initial step when making contact with a new business, because it will create the opportunity to **continue** the process of exploring the potential partnership as a real option. Figure 5 illustrates how the establishment of a relationship was unique to each business.

Figure 5: The pathway of consultation unique to each business



6.2.1.3. Building on employer networks to initiate relationships with new employers

The findings of this study established that a job coach could potentially expand future employer contacts via the network of a business. For example, the participant employers suggested that they could facilitate introductions to other businesses that they know or that they have dealings with. Furthermore, the participant employers showed a willingness to become available to personally speak to other employers. However, one employer recommended that he would feel confident to talk about the partnership to other employers only after he had gone through the experience of establishing a partnership.

This implies that employers have the capacity to not only create jobs in their own businesses but can also become agents to introduce supported employment to the wider business community. In support of this finding, Van Lieshout (2001) speculated that opportunities to maximise the use of employers, as speakers, will enhance the message from peer to peer employer marketing. Job coaches are therefore encouraged to maximise opportunities that facilitate employer peer to peer marketing and business networking to initiate relationships with employers.

It had been found that managers conferred amongst themselves about the supported employment partnership, which then facilitated easy and pleasant introductions made to the job coach. This implies that the job coach should be prepared to take the time to develop individual relationships that could encourage each manager to feel receptive about the partnership even though the final decision will be made at the highest level.

6.2.2. Marketing approaches and techniques with employers

Marketing strategies and approaches can enhance the willingness of employers to be interested in forming partnerships. It was found that businesses are likely to be interested in meeting the job coach and the participant employers advised the job coach to expand on a process to become known amongst employers. An argument could thus be made that many employers are willing to meet job coaches and learn about supported employment partnerships. It therefore implies that job coaches should take advantage of opportunities to market supported employment partnerships.

6.2.2.1. Face to face meetings

All the participant employers valued the opportunity to have a personal face to face meeting with the job coach in order to better understand supported employment and they were receptive towards the establishment of a partnership. In support of this finding, Mast, Sweeney, & West (2001) mentioned that in their experience, face to face meetings between the individual with a disability or his representative (job coach) and the employer strongly contributes to the creation of job opportunities for people with disabilities. Job coaches are therefore encouraged to ask employers to have a meeting with them in order for a partnership to be explored. This step will form the conduit for the employer and the job coach to engage with each other to negotiate a potential partnership.

6.2.2.2. Marketing a business case and social responsibility achievements of the partnership

Across the three case studies it was found that employers did not necessarily need more workers for business reasons. Yet, they showed an interest to employ a person with a psychiatric disability from the supported employment programme. It implies that, for these employers, consideration to employ a person with a psychiatric disability went beyond the productivity and business case. It was found that the humane and social concern had been a strong motivating factor for these employers. The participant employers were interested to find a job in their business because they could see how the prospect of employment had positively affected the life of a person with a psychiatric disability.

Implications for marketing and the role of a job coach are to develop techniques that will illustrate and facilitate discussions about the aim and value of supported employment and people with psychiatric disability. This finding is in contrast to the concept of marketing the traditional business case to employers that focus on the value of productivity to a business when employers have a demand for workers to do specific jobs and who meet the required labour needs (Randall & Buys 2006).

However, two participant employers could see the value of benefiting from the productivity of a new worker even though their business did not depend on the position while at the same time making a social difference. The fact that businesses will be motivated for different reasons should be expected. It is therefore being suggested that the business and social impact of a supported employment partnership should both be marketed to new employers.

6.2.2.3. Illustrate working partnerships

It could be said that illustrating a working model of a partnership (via the power point presentation) had enhanced the opportunity for employers to visualise the potential success of a partnership in their own business. It is recommended that job coaches choose techniques of marketing that will have a positive impact on employers. It is recognised that for some job coaches working in South Africa, the availability of resources such as portable computers may be a problem. This implies that the marketing technique will then need to be adapted to illustrate a working model in practice when meeting face to face with employers. Regardless of resources, the job coach needs to ensure that he/she has the skills and knowledge about supported employment so that the information can be relayed to employers in a logical and positive way. Job coaches are therefore encouraged to ensure that they are well prepared.

6.2.2.4. Media marketing

One of the participant employers suggested that the supported employment programme should consider media marketing, using the example of appearing on a television show that might promote a story about the supported employment program. This is a new area of marketing that should be further explored.

6.2.3. Developing sensitivity to employers' use of terminology

Each employer had a unique style of communication and use of language which can impact on the process of negotiating with employers. By understanding how employers use terminology meant the job coach could make a connection that prevented misunderstanding.

especially where different terms held the same meaning. For example, an employer's use of language about the issue of social concern included terms such as:

- *"doing good",*
- *"to be of help to someone who needs my help",*
- *"It's something (the partnership) that appeals to me as a good thing and I am interested in the humane aspect" and*
- *"It meets our equity numbers"- referring to employment equity legislative compliance.*

Other examples were words to describe the concept "**support**" with reference to the job coach role which was often referred to as "**back up**" by the employers. The term work accommodations had little influence to employers as they were not familiar with the term. In this case, employers related to "**special arrangements**" that needed to occur. The term "people with psychiatric disability" was not emphasised as it was felt that it reflected less of an employee status to employers. The preferred term used with employers was "**workers of the supported employment programme**". Two employers referred to the job coach as "**a recruitment person**" because it captured what the job coach was doing for them.

Effective communication can be enhanced when discussions with employers are relevant to their business priorities but also in the way they are accustomed to. It is therefore important to use terms within their business context. It is recommended that job coaches should be aware of the way employers use certain business terms when discussions are initiated. It is recommended that the job coach should continue to use these words as it would be most relevant to employers.

In the South African business community, employers will come from different cultures and use different languages. It is recommended that job coaches learn a deeper understanding

of the relevant terms and cultural subtleties that could influence how an employer may understand terms and concepts of the supported employment programme.

Following an employer's lead could create the risk of using terminology that may reinforce negative stereotypes; for example, the phrase: **"trigger him/her off"**. Out of context this term could reinforce that people with psychiatric disabilities are dangerous and uncontrollable. Job coaches are advised to initially allow employers to use expressions they are accustomed to, since the primary goal of early negotiations process is to understand employers better. However, job coaches should enlighten employers in later stages of the negotiation how such terminology could reinforce stigma for people with psychiatric disabilities. It is being suggested that when negotiating with employers, these types of situations will require for the job coach to consider at which stage of the process they are in and whether gaining an employer's trust is more important than challenging an employer's use of words; timing is thus of the utmost importance when addressing sensitive issues.

This study has shown that despite some evidence of negative stereotypes held by employers, they were in fact still seriously considering the partnership. Job coaches should accept that they are going to work with employers who will use terms that could offend people with psychiatric disabilities, but it does not mean that partnerships could not develop.

6.3. IDENTIFYING THE NEEDS AND REQUIREMENTS OF A BUSINESS

6.3.1. KNOWLEDGE ABOUT SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME IN THE CONTEXT OF CHANGE IN THE BUSINESS

6.3.1.1. Employers need information on supported employment

All the participant employers wanted to know more about the supported employment programme. A central focus of conversation was the person with a psychiatric disability and

consequences of change that surround the process of recruitment and employment placement. It was found that they wanted to understand how the partnership would unfold by exploring the different stages of implementing a partnership using the supported employment model. It can therefore be assumed that employers are going to want to understand the details of how a partnership would unfold as it relates to the process of creating a supported work placement. Knowing what to expect leaves the job coach with the advantage of being able to anticipate more or less what to expect of employers when meeting them for the first time.

The most important operational stages of a partnership was understood to be as follows:

- The identification of potential job vacancies that could become available in the business.
- The identification of the requirements of the job vacancy in the business as it would relate to the business needs as well as the skills of a person with a psychiatric disability.
- Exploring the operational process for hiring and recruiting a worker with a psychiatric disability; especially supporting the employer to be successful in doing so.
- Exploring potential work accommodations and support that could or should be offered.

Looking across the three case studies, the employers anticipated how the operational stages of a partnership can influence their business in terms of changes to the workplace environment; the financial cost, potential disruption to the workplace's social culture and day to day management practices. It is suggested that these operational stages can provide the job coach with a framework to know what to expect and how to explore the potential development of a partnership when meeting with employers for the first time.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

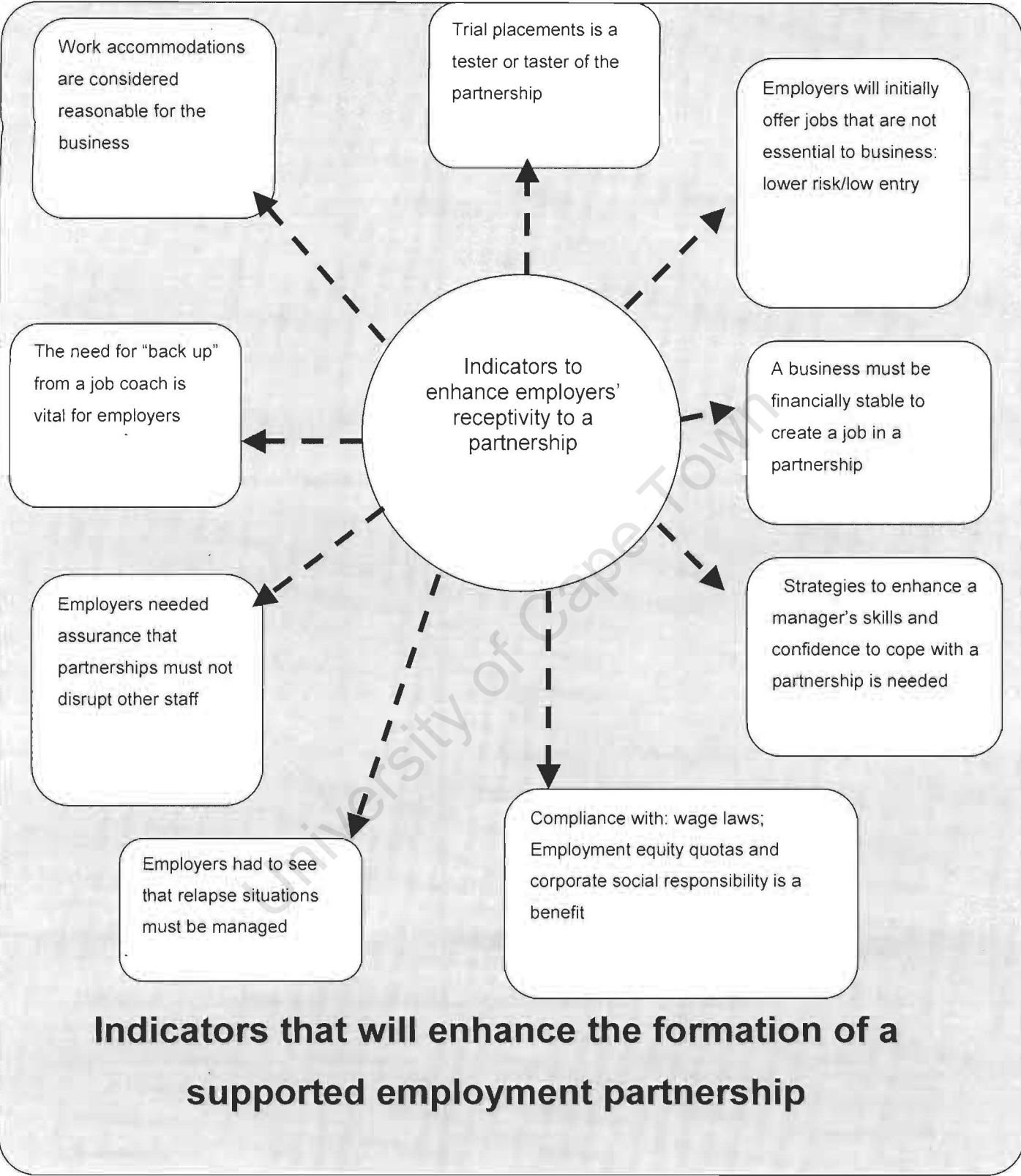
Conclusions from this study will draw attention to strategies and approaches that have implications for practice guidelines on supported employment job coach services offered to businesses to develop partnerships that will result in employing people with psychiatric disabilities.

7.1. INDICATORS THAT WILL ENHANCE THE FORMATION OF A PARTNERSHIP

Based on the findings of employer perceptions, it emerged that certain preferences needed to be in place for a partnership to be formed. The following indicators were extrapolated from the findings to show employer needs and requirements that will enhance the formation of a partnership. The identification of these indicators confirms that job coaches have to learn and understand business related factors. Business indicators that will enhance the formation of a partnership are summarised in figure 6.

The following part of the discussion will take employer preferences into consideration and examine the implications for job coaches to assist employers to develop supported employment partnerships.

Figure 6: Indicators that will enhance the formation of a partnership



7.2. Tailoring the partnership

7.2.1. Taking employers' preferences into consideration is required

Knowing these indicators should provide deeper insight into the issues employers will want to explore in addition to the basic operational stages of how a partnership will unfold in a business. Implications for the role of the job coach which are two fold.

Firstly, it makes a compelling case to encourage employers to share their perceptions and ideas that can shape how partnerships should be tailored to the needs of their businesses. This process will support employers to become receptive to forming partnerships as their businesses needs and queries are addressed. By developing strategic partnerships with businesses, service providers (such as job coaches) can increase employer ownership, participation and support. This could improve hiring results of people with disabilities (Van Lieshout 2001).

Secondly, employers placed a high value on the supportive role of the job coach in dealing with changes that a partnership will bring to their business; the job coach's supportive role was seen to be pivotal. Therefore, when meeting with employers, the job coach should concentrate on demonstrating the possibility of a mutually beneficial relationship within the partnership. Job coaches are encouraged to illustrate the extent to which they would be available to assist employers during the formation of a partnership.

The dilemma of how to provide support offered by the job coach will be influenced by type of constraints businesses may have. Rogan, Banks, & Herbein (2003) highlighted that every workplace will have its own culture and climate; and that service providers (job coaches)

should strive to adhere to the rituals and practices of job sites and try and facilitate employer and co-worker interactions where possible.

7.2.2..Job coaches need to identify specific situations where employers need support and education

The need for support and education from the job coach was shared by all managers; however; managers are unique individuals who differ in terms of their skills, knowledge and experience of working with people with psychiatric disability, as well as their availability of time. It is therefore important to understand each manager's unique circumstances to ensure the required degree of support offered to them. The following scenarios describe participant employers' different need for support:

- A manager showed confidence in supervising the worker with a psychiatric disability only once reassured that he had 'backup' if he needed it.
- A manager immediately stated that his time was too limited to provide extended support to an employee with a psychiatric disability.
- A manager expressed some concern that working with a person with a disability would make wear them down; especially if they felt they did not have support.
- A manager expressed concern about conflict with existing staff who may feel the worker with a disability could be usurping their jobs.
- A manager expressed potential fear of being harmed by the worker with psychiatric disability.

Consequently these perceptions should be openly discussed and dispelled during the initial interview that the job coach has with employers. Job coaches should deal with employer concerns to minimise employers' perceptions of risks and thereby enhance the formation of

a partnership. This is done by encouraging an employer to feel that managing a person with a psychiatric disability is possible and that support will be offered. Reaching a point where employers feel that the management of a person with a psychiatric disability is possible will influence their decision about establishing a partnership in a positive way thereby enhancing the chances of the formation of a partnership with a business.

By uncovering how and what the employer wants the job coach to do, it became apparent that job coaches must make an assessment of the employer and understand his/her needs before embarking on the partnership. The type of assistance required by employers was identified by participants as:

- Education and awareness to develop their knowledge about psychiatric disability.
- Opportunities to develop skills and understanding of how to best work with a person with a psychiatric disability.
- Input on the process of choosing a manager who would be most suitable for the partnership.
- Educations about referral systems in order know where to get help if the worker with a psychiatric disability needed specialised care.

All of these identified requirements fit well with the type of support that a job coach could offer employers. Education and training is considered as an important step towards breaking down the barriers of stereotypes and fears that employers might hold. It is further recommended that education and training approaches should include:

- A space for employers to talk about their perceptions and concerns freely.
- Special seminars dealing with employer concerns only (van Lieshout 2001).
- The promotion of employer recognition opportunities for those who are involved with disabled employees in the workplace. (Van Lieshout 2001)

7.2.3. Job coaches need to assist employers to facilitate natural supports

Job coaches must adhere to typical business practices as much as possible by facilitating natural supports and supplement workplace supports as needed (Jenaro, Mank, Bottomley, Doose, & Tuckerman 2002). The literature illustrates the option of natural supports as a way to facilitate better social integration of disabled people and it suggests that employers should offer opportunities for friendships and mentorship to allow the person to become socially integrated into the workplace (Jenaro, Mank, Bottomley, Doose, & Tuckerman 2002). It was established that that these accommodations will enhance employment outcomes of the person with a psychiatric disability (Becker, Drake, Bond, Xie, Dain, & Harrison 1998). However, recognition of the value of natural support, does not address the employers' fears about the potential risks and concerns. The findings of this research study show that the participant employers may struggle initially to offer natural workplace supports because of their limited time and lack of confidence. It is recommended that in this type of situation, the job coach should build employer relationships first and then encourage employer support for the new employee. This is confirmed by a finding that suggests that if co-workers know and trust the employment specialist they will feel more at ease with the supported employee (Rogan, Banks, & Herbein 2003). On the other hand, it was found that the corporate business could afford to alter the job description of a manager or do special skills training and development; so doing, the manager could be trained to offer natural support. Natural supports are encouraged through the facilitation and training provided by service providers (job coaches) of the supported employment agencies to co workers (Rogan, Banks, & Herbein 2003). It is recommended that the job coach should be involved in the training and support in becoming confident to take on this role independently.

7.2.4. Job coaches need to assist employers to implement work accommodations

The role of the job coach is pivotal to acquire and implement workplace accommodations (Becker et al. 1998; Gates 2000; Jenaro, Mank, Bottomley, Doose, & Tuckerman 2002; West et al. 2001). The findings offer insight about the nature and circumstances under which work accommodations can shape a partnership according to businesses needs. It emerged that the participant employers could understand that the person with a psychiatric disability may need workplace accommodations such as:

- Access to consult with the job coach.
- Access to keep their medical appointments by getting time off from work.
- Access to supervision by co-workers
- Access to take time off to collect their disability grant.
- Access to workplace support by the job coach, employer and or managers.

For the participant employers, the motivation to comply with workplace accommodations was not related to their need to comply with legislation. Rather, it was based on their capacity to see the value for workplace accommodations. They valued workplace accommodations because it provided them with a structured plan with which to ensure that the person with a psychiatric disability will succeed in the workplace.

Job coaches should therefore ensure that when establishing new partnerships, employers should be made aware of the value of workplace accommodations in the context of legislative compliance and as a strategy to ensure the success of a work placement. The need to collaborate with the job coach is confirmed by Unger (1999) who found that employers are increasingly collaborating with employment specialists and rehabilitation

professionals in order to identify and develop accommodations in the workplace for their employees with disabilities (Unger 1999).

It was found that employers valued strategies that will make the partnership a success; hence it made them receptive to establish partnerships. Therefore it is recommended that workplace support structures provided by the job coach should be tailored to the needs of the employer and the person with a psychiatric disability.

7.2.5. Employers need to comply with legislation

When employers consider a partnership, they have a need to understand the legal context of paying wages to workers with a disability or earn a disability grant. Furthermore, employers want to ensure compliance with the law. This has implications for the job coach role to respond to the employers' queries about finances and reassure employers that the partnership can be implemented within the compliance of the law related to the partnership. If the job coach is able to do this, then the chance of enhancing an employer's receptivity to form a partnership could be achieved.

7.2.6. A financially strained business

It became apparent that a job coach cannot make a difference when a company is financially strained but willing to employ a person with a psychiatric disability. But, for some businesses, financial positions can change due to time of year and better profitability periods. In this type of situation, the job coach could consider contacting the employer later when their financial situation has improved. Job coaches are encouraged to understand how partnerships can be affected by financial issues of a company so that they do not mistake a business's financial incapacity as a long term barrier to form a partnership.

7.2.9. Job coaches need to assist employers to create a socially friendly and accepting work environment

Employers wanted to feel reassured that their existing staff would be comfortable with the new worker with a psychiatric disability and that the worker with a disability had the support. Employers had anxiety about the entry stage of placement. The employers valued the assistance of a job coach on site especially at the early stages of the work placement. Implications were that employers felt at ease knowing that the job coach would be available to consult and do work site visits.

7.2.10. Job coaches need to assist employers to understand implications of disclosure

The decision to have the job coach attend the work site with the supported employee brought about implications for disclosure. It became obvious that if the job coach was to provide this kind of support requested by the employer, then the worker with a psychiatric disability would need to be prepared to allow for some kind of explanation of his /her need for a job coach at work. It implied that the job coach would have to explore the issue of partial or full disclosure when they apply for jobs in businesses that require a strong presence of the job coach.

7.3. THE EMPLOYERS' CHOICE OF A TRIAL PLACEMENT

The findings revealed that employers would prefer to have a trial partnership by employing a worker from the supported employment programme for a trial period. Implications are that

job coaches should explore the option of trial placements, especially when employers need to gradually gain confidence in forming a partnership.

7.3.1. Prepare employers for trial placements

The fact that trial placements cannot guarantee instant success should be explored with employers. For the job coach it will require a delicate balance encouraging the employer to choose a trial placement (because it will show the success of a partnership) and being honest with the employer that a trial placement could present some problems. The options of support, relevant to each business, should also be considered. This includes the option of changing the worker in the event that a thing goes wrong; as a way to manage the situation and preserving the partnership.

7.3.2. Inform workers with a psychiatric disability about the purpose of trial placements

People with psychiatric disabilities similarly need to understand the implications of a trial placement i.e. that it is a temporary placement and an opportunity to make a good impression. The participant employers favoured trial placements, therefore job coaches should ensure the person with a psychiatric disability is informed, protected and supported. At the stage of a trial placement, the person with a psychiatric disability becomes an active agent that will also influence the employers' receptivity and therefore the future development of the partnership. It is recommended that the job coach should explore the meaning and value of trial placements with the person with a psychiatric disability prior to entering into a work trial placement.

7.3.3. Develop trial placement guidelines

In this study, the option of paying the worker with a disability was considered as reasonable during the trial placement stage. This is in contrast to previous experiences where employers had considered trial placements as work training without payment. It was found that the length of a trial placement was going to be chosen considering the preferences of the employer and the person with a psychiatric disability. In my experience, the average time for trial placements is usually one week. It became apparent that trial placements could be a contentious issue that could interfere with the goal of long term sustainable employment for the person with a psychiatric disability if guidelines and agreements are not defined. However, trial placements could also be viewed as an opportunity to procure long term placements in businesses because it will offer them an opportunity to develop confidence that a partnership can be successfully implemented. If job coaches are willing to consider the option of trial placements based on employers' request, it is recommended that strong negotiation occurs to facilitate the establishment of a partnership that will procure a formal workplace of the worker with a psychiatric disability.

CHAPTER 8: RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has implications for future research and practice in supported employment, for employers of businesses, for people with psychiatric disabilities and occupational therapists. The following recommendations have been identified:

1. The formation of supported employment partnerships has been shown to be a viable option for three businesses in South Africa. Employers valued the role of the job coach in supported employment partnerships. It is strongly recommended that occupational therapists persevere in establishing supported employment partnerships with employers to create work opportunities for people with psychiatric disabilities.
2. It was found that employers in this study were receptive to establishing supported employment partnerships. However the strength of their commitment is not yet known. It is recommended that further research be carried out to establish the commitment of willing employers to explore factors that will contribute to sustainability of supported employment partnerships with business from employers' perspectives.
3. The value of marketing was found to be an important activity for job coaches to become known amongst employers and facilitate the process of partnerships with businesses. It is recommended that occupational therapists working in supported employment programmes consider incorporating a strategic marketing plan that will allow them to ensure that they have the necessary resources, strategies and time available to initiate relationships with new employers. Furthermore, the concept of

marketing should be researched further in a multidisciplinary study involving occupational therapists, marketing specialists and employers as this could enhance the development of a marketing strategy with greater insight to technical approaches.

4. It was found that employers could be instrumental in promoting partnerships to other businesses as well as introducing the job coach to new employer contacts. This study had alluded to the idea of mobilising business communities and using their business network structures to promote supported employment amongst businesses. It is recommended that occupational therapists working in supported employment programmes should consult, collaborate and meet new employers by:
 - Tapping into the business community network, for example, by attending employer forums in local business communities.
 - Asking employers to get involved in promoting supported employment partnerships to other business colleagues.
 - Asking employers to consider sharing their success stories in promotional materials of the supported employment programme
 - Asking employers to introduce the job coach to other employers.
5. The process of developing relationships with employers became central in the formation of partnerships. The stage of understanding the needs of employers highlighted that occupational therapists need to develop sensitivity to what employers want and need for the formation of partnerships. Job coaches have to understand the impact of employers as customers of their service. It is therefore recommended that job coaches undergo training about business practices to enhance their knowledge and skills about what employers' value and need for partnerships to develop.

6. Strategies such as education and training offered by the job coach to employers was found to be an important activity that would impact on the formation of supported employment partnerships with businesses. It is therefore recommended that further research should be done to explore this issue in more depth.
7. Employers valued education and training that provide them with information and prepare them to work with a person with a psychiatric disability. Also, employers valued the presence of the job coach at worksites. Both situations highlighted that the issue of disclosure will affect the worker with a psychiatric disability. It is therefore recommended that job coaches explain and explore the implications of disclosure and its relevance to secure supported employment work placements with people with psychiatric disability through research and practice.

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APPENDICES

APPENDICES 1: INFORMATION SHEET

INFORMATION SHEET ABOUT THE STUDY

Title of the project:

The process of establishing supported employment partnerships with businesses to create employment for people with psychiatric disabilities.

Principal investigator:

Ms Zerina Hajwani BSc. (Occupational Therapy), Post Graduate student, School of Occupational Therapy, School of Health and rehabilitation Sciences, University of Cape Town.

Contact details: Tel 021 4403219 or 083 3247494 and email: zerina.hajwani@gmail.com

Project supervisor

Associate Professor Lana Van Niekerk, School of Occupational Therapy, School of Health and rehabilitation Sciences, University of Cape Town

An introduction to the purpose of the study

Sustainable employment creation within companies remains a widespread need amongst people with disability. Employers and business owners play a vital role in job creation for people with disabilities. The supported employment programme based at Valkenberg

psychiatric hospital has established sustainable work opportunities within various companies and intends to create and improve partnerships with employers.

The proposed study intends to include employers as key participants by engaging employers in interviews about discussion of establishing partnerships between businesses and supported employment programmes. The need to include employers in this study is based on the primary assumption that there is a need to better understand the employers concerns and experience that will impact on their decision to consider a partnership with their business and the supported employment programme. The key outcome of the study will be the following:

To create a awareness amongst South African supported employment service providers to better understand the employers' needs from a SA business perspective.

Procedures that will occur in the proposed study

If you are prepared to be involved in the study, you will be required to allocate 4 sessions of approximately one hour each of your time for an interview by the above principle investigator. Each session may be one week apart and may include some time for the principle investigator to observe your business work environment. The meeting place for these sessions of interviews will be arranged at any place and time at your convenience. Prior to each session you will receive a confirmation call for your appointment.

Expectations for Visit 1

The first visit will be a brief introduction to the supported employment programme based at Valkenberg hospital with some guiding questions of interest that you may have about the current programme. It could include a brief presentation of practical examples of the

programme projects in other businesses. At this stage it will be important to discover key areas of questions or interests you may have on the topic.

Expectations for Visit 2

On the second visit, a few guiding questions about understanding your business will be asked as a means to understand how your business functions with some emphasis of your ideas or previous involvement in job creation or placement of people with disability in your company or of personal experience.

Expectations for Visit 3

Taking into account of the kind of information gained from the first two sessions, a few guiding and semi structured questions will be asked about your perceptions and ideas of applying supported employment within a business like yours. Specific emphasis will be to understand the barriers and needs that your company may require in considering the idea of establishing a partnership with your company. This includes trying to understand as many questions and concerns you may have for the possibility of forming or not forming a partnership with the supported employment programme.

Expectations for Visit 4

The fourth session will be to consult and consolidate any key themes and ideas that have been discovered since the first three interviews as a means to collaborate findings that are consistent with your views.

Risk, discomforts and benefits that could affect participants of the study

It is not anticipated that you will experience any discomfort from the sessions and it is important to reassure you that there is no right or wrong answer but that your opinion is most

valuable in gaining and understanding of a business person's ideas, attitudes and opinion of supported employment programmes.

You will not be forced to formulate a partnership with the supported employment programme.

The benefit will be to contribute to the knowledge of how to better improve partnerships between businesses and supported employment programmes by learning about barriers and factors that a business may consider as encouraging to start such a partnership.

Confidentiality related to participants in the study

You will be allocated a pseudonym which will remain confidential to the Principle investigator and the project supervisor.

Your company will at no stage be advertised by name or logo or any identity related to your company. All data recorded, using only the assigned pseudonym will be stored on a computer and access will be restricted by a password known only to the principle investigator and the primary supervisor.

Data collection tape recordings will be locked away in a cupboard.

The results will be published and will not be possible to identify individual subjects or companies.

Once the study is completed, it will be stored for five years and then be destroyed after five years.

Should you or your company at any stage feel that you would like to be promoted as opposed to remaining confidential, and then this option will be available to you.

A participants request for further information:

You are encouraged to discuss any concerns regarding the study with the principle investigator at any time, and to feel free to ask any questions at any time. The contact details of the key investigator are included above.

A participant's right of Refusal or withdrawal from the study:

You may refuse to participate in this study and if you do consent to participate then you will be free to withdraw from the study at any time and without fear of prejudice. Should you decide to withdraw from the study then we would encourage you to contact the principle investigator at the earliest opportunity. In the event that you withdraw, all your data will be destroyed and confidentiality up to that point will remain ongoing.

APPENDICES 2: CONSENT FORM

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY

Title of the project:

Employers' perceptions of supported employment as a viable option for their business

Principle investigator:

Ms Zerina Hajwani BSc. (Occupational Therapy), Post Graduate student, School of Occupational Therapy, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Cape Town.

Contact details: Tel 021 4403219 or 083 3247494 and email: zerina.hajwani@gmail.com

Project supervisor

Associate Professor Lana Van Niekerk, School of Occupational Therapy, School of Health and rehabilitation Sciences, University of Cape Town

You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. Your signature certifies that you have decided to participate, having understood and read the information presented on the information sheet given to you. Your signature also certifies that you have had an adequate opportunity to discuss this study with the investigator and you have had all your questions answered to your satisfaction. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

Please complete the following once you have decided to give your consent to participate in the study explained in the informed consent document. Please PRINT

This part of the consent form should be completed by the participant who will be interviewed:

I, (the undersigned of Company name and address)

Postcode:

Phone:

Consent to participate in this study and give my permission for any results from this study to be used in any report or research paper, on the understanding that confidentiality will be preserved. I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice. If so, I undertake to contact the Principle Investigator (Tel 083 324 7494) at the earliest opportunity.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

This part of the consent form should be completed by the principle investigator of the study who will be interviewing participants:

I have explained the nature and the procedures involved in the study to which the subject has consent to participate and have answered all questions. In my judgement the subject is

voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent and possesses the legal capacity to get informed consent to participate in this research study.

Principle Investigator: _____ Date: _____

This part of the consent form should be completed by a voluntary witness:

My signature as witness certifies that the subject signed this consent form in my presence as his/her voluntary act and deed.

Witness: _____ Date: _____

University of Cape Town